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STRANGELY MARRIED.

BY ERNEST BUNENT.

Author of "Strayed Away," "Milly Lee," "John Kendrake's Destiny," &c.

CHAPTER XIX.

Meseems my face can yet make faith in men,
And break their brains with beauty; for a word,
An eyelid's twitch, an eye's turn, tie them fast
And make their souls cleave to me. God be thanked,
This air has not yet curdled all the blood
That went to make me fair!

MILDRED came in. She saw that Lizzie looked pale, and she attributed her pallor to a natural emotion at seeing her lover. The two ladies retired to the dressing-room.

John Lenmore remained alone, to think of what had taken place.

"How strangely destiny plays out our life's history for us," he thought. "What a change there is for me since yesterday. Had I come down six hours earlier I should have been in time to save her."

The one that he had most to fear was Mrs. Dalrymple. The son, he could meet man to man, oppose the strength of brain to subtlety, the trained talent of a gentleman to the craft of an adventurer. Dalrymple had won Lizzie by treachery, but treachery could not keep her, nor win her heart from John Lenmore.

With Mrs. Dalrymple it was different; there he had to contend against the influence that an experienced woman of the world could bring to bear upon a young and innocent girl. Again, there was the power that she was silently acquiring over Mr. Dacre. The lady of The Croft had much to fight for, much at stake. There was her son's welfare, perhaps his safety; there was her wealth—for if it was as John Lenmore suspected, the riches Paul had brought home were not his own.

"But if she can lure Mr. Dacre into a marriage," John said to himself, "she will have a hold upon him that will not be without its effect on me. Love

dulls the judgment of the best and wisest men; and stern and rigid as his is, he could not, were she his wife, bring disgrace upon the name of her son."

Yet John did not despair. In the presence of more danger stronger. There was a sense of proud pleasure even in having so much to do battle with. He liked to set his brain and nerve against difficulty and peril, and so prove to Lizzie that for the sake of her love he could be unconquerable.

While John Lenmore dwelt upon Mrs. Dalrymple in his soliloquy, she was upstairs with the master of the Lodge, and Mr. Dacre was glad of her society. Passion has a philosophy of its own; and Mr. Dacre, who some short time since would have deemed it sacrilege to give to another the place Lizzie's mother had held in his heart, had learned to look upon the possibility in a different light.

He was not an old man; and he had begun to think that when Lizzie and his daughter Mildred were married, and gone from his house, he would be very lonely; frequently, too, he had thought it was a pity that a splendid creature like Mrs. Dalrymple should live in solitude.

"Paul did not come with you?" said Mr. Dacre, as the lady, with her fine figure outlined gracefully by her riding-habit, seated herself.

Mr. Dacre's eye for such beauty was as keen as ever.

"No; he did not care to intrude on Mr. Lenmore. Men at that age have an instinctive sense of rivalry, and Paul, poor fellow, admires her very much," said Mrs. Dalrymple.

"Too late," smiled Mr. Dacre. "I promised her to Lenmore years ago, and he has worked well for her."

"Poor Paul; I told him so when he hinted—that is to say, he hinted nothing, but we who can read the signs of our children's passions know their meaning; it was scarcely wise to throw them together."

"Perhaps not; but a true woman is always safe with an honourable man."

"Yes; but the pain?" sighed Mrs. Dalrymple.

"Must be borne, and in silence, as I have borne it, and I daresay you have."

Her dark eyes grew intense and mournful as she said:

"Who has not?"

"Have you?—pardon the question," said Mr. Dacre, becoming interested. "Have you been many years alone?"

"So many that the time spent with my husband seems like a dream, and my only pleasure has been to be faithful to his memory."

"So it has been with me," said Mr. Dacre; "but I do not think that a long-protracted sorrow is wise. In mourning for the dead, we may forget our duty to the living."

The lady assented to that thoughtfully.

"But when we have been happy with the one we loved," she said, "when he has been all that we could desire, kind and brave, true and tender, is it not better to live on the memory than to have it sullied, perhaps, by giving ourselves to one who may be quite different?"

"How different?"

"In temperament, nature, intellect, his very habits, ways of thought, manner of expression, of affection. We, who have outlived the age of romance, know that these are the true links of love."

"Yes," he said, "for love is not all dreamy passion. Women, as well as men, require companionship, sympathy, kindred tastes, harmony of spirit, and unity of aim. Young people, too, forget one grand essential."

"And that?"

"That is domestic comfort. Love of itself is not the sole element that makes a happy home; as my young friend, John Lenmore, has it. Much of the true philosophy of life can be seen and studied at the well-ordered breakfast-table."

"True," she said, "but was it not a curious thing for so young a man to say?"

"John Lenmore is wise in his generation," he said, with a smile. "He is at once passionate and

calm, temperate and ardent. He has studied human nature, woman's nature chiefly, and found out the secret—that lasting happiness greatly depends on domestic comfort."

"You praise him highly."

"I do him justice simply. Had he chosen my daughter Mildred instead of Lizzie, I would have given her to him just as gladly."

"And he knew that?"

"Yes."

"Then he made a disinterested choice."

"Quite; John Lenmore could do no other."

"I wish he thought as highly of my son," she meditated, with an anger that she did not permit to mar the sweetness of her face. "He is a prince by the side of this young farmer."

In saying that she did John Lenmore an injustice, and she knew it. John Lenmore had impressed her against her will. He was a better man, truer, braver, and more honourable than her son.

"Is it not strange," said Mr. Dacre, "that in all these years you were not won from the memory of him you have lost?"

She shook her head with a smile.

"I might ask you the same question, Mr. Dacre."

He smiled in return.

"The answer would be simple, I waited many years for the one I loved, and I lost her soon—too soon, as it would have been had I lost her one hour before I closed my eyes on this earth. My heart seemed to die. I cared only for my child and her children."

"And now?"

"They are growing past my care. It is the way of the world, Mrs. Dalrymple, that those for whom we give up everything leave us as age creeps upon us; yet we cannot blame them, for we have done the same."

"Children do not think of that."

"We should, and before it is too late."

"It is too late for me."

He smiled.

"You are not old."

"Past forty, the saddest truth a woman can confess."

"Once more let me ask, why?"

"It is the time when she feels that her beauty has no longer the power to charm; her beauty is on the wane, and younger, fairer women take her place."

"Only with younger men," he said, "With them love is a dream, a delirium. With men who have reached the sober side of forty it is a calm strength and lasting passion, whose very essence is fidelity."

"But even men, as you describe, at the sober side of forty, prefer, as a rule, the youngest and fairest of our sex to those of kindred age. They like the very bloom of beauty, not its decline."

"Some beauty never fades," he said; "it grows richer and sweeter as the days go on. Time, inexorable as he is, stays his hand in wonder, and makes it more glorious, instead of giving it to decay."

For a man who rarely went out of his way in speech or action the implied compliment was not without a certain value.

"Have you ever seen such a beauty?" she asked.

"I have."

"And where?"

Now came the chance, but Mr. Dacre did not take it. He had taken her hand within the last few minutes; he looked into her eyes, but with the very words upon his lips he stopped, and she was disappointed.

She mistook the reason of his hesitation. It was not over-caution, it was fear, as to how she would receive the words, that would have amounted to a declaration.

"No!" he said, mentally, "I am not a boy to run the risk to be laughed at. When I ask her to be mine I must be sure of the answer."

"We will exchange confidences another time," he said.

And she accepted the delay with a pressure of the hand, that made him more than ever inclined to take advantage of the present moment. He deferred it, however.

Her disappointment was but momentary. To have drawn him on so far was a certain sign that on another occasion he would go to the full extent required. She changed the subject gracefully.

"You have been a long time at Thorpendean, Mr. Dacre."

"Since the death of my cousin Godfrey."

"He left no children, then?"

"He never married."

The dusky beauty of her countenance underwent a change.

"Indeed!" she said; "I heard otherwise. Was there not some story of a girl whom he married in the south of France?"

"A *Naison*," he said, in reply; "a little creditable to him as to her. I have the whole story in that cabinet;" and he pointed to a ponderous piece of ebony furniture against the wall.

"But it is quite clear that the girl herself did not believe she was his wife, for in some of her letters which I have in there she asked him to marry her for the sake of her child."

Mrs. Dalrymple's tone was low and subdued when she spoke again.

"I heard that she was cruelly deceived."

"I am afraid that she was very willing to be deceived. She was a passionate, ill-trained creature beautiful, I believe, or he would not have cared for her. But there was a stain upon her name before she met him."

She sighed.

"Poor girl!" and yet she must have loved him. Men have little pity for their victims,—little mercy for those whose hearts they win, and trample on. The worst of women deserve a better fate, than the best of them whose sin is the depth of their love receive at the hands of those who wrong them most bitterly."

CHAPTER XX.

I am right glad

I never am to see you any more,

For I should come to hate you easily;

I would not have you live. Swinburne.

MR. DACRE did not like the lady less for the pity given to a woman who had erred. The gentle sex have not much sympathy for each other; the tempter, man, is kinder if more unjust.

"You have some Christian charity, I see," he said, "and that is very rare in such a case."

"I never like to condemn, Mr. Dacre. To tell me of a sin is to say nothing. I must know the circumstances—the nature of the temptation. Where doubt is, love cannot exist; where doubt is not, love is perfect,—faith entire."

"A very frank expression of opinion," he said, with a smile; "and if it came from the lips of an English lady it would sound strange."

"I am not an English lady. I am no longer a girl; I have lived long enough to see that error is not always crime. Speaking of this poor girl as an instance—her fault was too much faith in a man who told her that he loved her."

"We have a different code of ethics here, Mrs. Dalrymple, in the cold logic of our insular institutions. We do not visit such sins so gently. The line of duty is simple and strict."

"But where love is strong—"

"Duty should be stronger."

"Is it always so?"

"To say that is proof that crime is not crime," he replied.

"Hard, and stern, and cold," thought Mrs. Dalrymple, "this man would never forgive if I were his wife, and if he were to know my history. He would send me from him, though he tore his heartstrings out in doing so."

"We are having a strange conversation," said Mrs. Dalrymple.

He thought so too.

"It is better to look these things in the face," he resumed, "they are the lessons of our existence, the landmarks by which we know our way. Those who sin and suffer do some good to others in teaching them what not to do."

"You speak severely, Mr. Dacre. Are you expressing your opinion of what should be, or what you feel?"

"Both."

"Would you," she asked, laying her hand upon his arm, "be as stern to that poor girl, if she were living?"

"Yes,—quite! Had she been Godfrey's wife, I would have seen her come into this inheritance without a single pang. As it is, I would deal justly with her."

"How?"

"I tried to find her once, with the intention of seeing that she was properly cared for. It was for the sake of her child. It is the pity of it, that children, the entirely innocent, are the greatest sufferers in these cases."

Mrs. Dalrymple sighed heavily; but remained silent.

"I could pity her more," said Mr. Dacre, "if I had more faith in her,—she was young, impulsive and beautiful; but her impulse had a method in it. My cousin, when he met her, was little more than a boy, he had led a wild life. He was scarcely answerable for his own actions; he showered gold upon her, he gave her jewels and rich dresses, he gratified every caprice of her vanity. He was lavish in all his taste. Just as if he would have bought a priceless horse, or some rare gem, he won this girl with his gold, because the possession of such a splendid creature

gave him a certain notoriety, and made him the envy of other men."

"He married her?"

"When they had been together three months he went through a ceremony that in itself was the merest farce—he was underage, a minor, and a ward in Chancery. Their marriage was no marriage, and she knew it. The letters I have there prove that she was a clever adventuress."

The words made her pale cheek burn. He was laying her heart bare to herself, telling her her own history, and she felt it more bitterly because it was all the truth. She would willingly have led him back to the point where he was so near making the declaration; but the spell was broken for the present—truth to say, he had not too much faith in woman-kind. He had confided implicitly in the two probabilities he had loved and buried; the rest he doubted, as men of the world are apt to doubt, perhaps because they believe in the existence of the badness they help to create. Whatever the reason, his warmth had subsided, and he was courteously calm. He rang the bell and told the servant who appeared to send Miss Amory to him.

Mrs. Dalrymple, being in a riding-habit, had no pretext to stay in; but when Mr. Dacre offered to accompany her to The Croft, she did not decline. At her time of life, and with her purpose, she could not afford to lose the slightest chance.

"Yet I will not trouble you," she said. "Paul is sure to meet me—then I have the groom."

To her chagrin Mr. Dacre bowed, accepting the implied denial of his company.

He gave her an invite to dinner for the day after the morrow and took her to the door. She let her hand linger in his long enough to make him remember her pleasantly when she was gone.

Mrs. Dalrymple did not meet Paul. She had not left The Croft many minutes when a visitor arrived; a young and gracefully built man, with a careworn face and a heavy heart.

He asked for Mr. Dalrymple, and on learning that he was at home, went straight in as if he knew the house.

Paul could not repress a start when he saw the stranger with a cold and cynical smile.

"Bash," he said, quietly; "this is not part of our compact."

"You did not keep faith with me," said the other, in a voice broken by emotion, "and I feared that I was being followed."

"By whom?"

"A stranger—perhaps more than one. But the one I fear most came to New York on an English ship, and since then he has not lost sight of me."

"Well?"

"You speak the word as if you do not know my peril—as if I have not suffered for your sake."

"Pardon me," said Paul, with a cruel smile, "it is I who should complain. If you have been tracked down, as you say, you place me in some danger by coming here. And now you are here, tell me what you want."

The stranger was too broken-spirited to resent Mr. Dalrymple's deliberate insolence of tone. Paul saw his power and determined to use it.

"Sit down," he said, with pretended kindness.

"You look tired."

"I am, indeed; footsore and heart-weary."

"Have you travelled far?"

"For nearly fifty miles, and with scarcely a shilling in my pocket. I have had to seek the help of strangers even, or I should not have been here."

"You might have written."

"Where could I stay while awaiting your reply? How could I endure the torture of suspense, when I know that I was not safe in any one place for a day?"

"But how is it that you are so poor? I gave you plenty of money when we parted."

The other did not reply.

"I see," said Paul, with a sneer, "you couldn't resist your old temptation, and you had the usual luck, which, as a rule, is the very worst of luck. Upon my word, I am sorry for you! You have not nerve enough to be a clever rascal, and sluggish honesty never made a fortune."

Fred Amory—for it was he—did not speak for some moments. He sat opposite his tempter, studying his face intently, and the face he studied was hard, mocking, and pitiless.

The wretched young man had endured much misery since he parted from his treacherous companion in the colonies. The memory of the tragedy haunted him—the fear of capture pursued him everywhere. Now that it was too late he saw with what diabolical skill the other had contrived to fix upon him the burden of guilt—the whole weight of punishment.

"Why did you come here?" Paul asked again.

"Could I stay away?" said Lizzie's brother,

passionately. "From the moment I touched the English shore my footsteps have been impelled here by an involuntary power. I longed to see my old home. Every thought, every memory, every dear association drew me here; and I felt that I must come, even if I came to my fate."

"Scarcely a good reason for such a risk."

"I have another," said Fred, sternly. He was gathering courage now; the other's sneering coolness made him desperate. "I came to keep you to your promise, Paul Dalrymple; for I know that you would break it if you dared. I want my share of the proceeds of the crime to which you lured me, in which you made me an innocent and unwilling accomplice. My life is at stake, my soul in jeopardy. I dare not set foot on the threshold of my home, I dare not look at the faces of those I love. I must leave England, and for ever, and I must have the means to live—not in peace, for that is gone eternally—but in safety and to drown remembrance."

Paul Dalrymple clapped his hands as he would have done in applause of a well-delivered speech on the stage.

"Really, I did not give you credit for so much histrionic talent," he said. "Upon my word! When other things fail, you might make a gentlemanly income of thirty shillings a week on the boards of some minor theatre. I have heard of certain bravo, Hicks. You might take a stately mantle, and be a bravo, Amory—only, I forgot, it would not do to take that name."

Frederick rose, trembling with passion. The mask had fallen, and he perceived how bitterly he had been deceived.

"So it has come to this!" he said, between his teeth. "You have played your game well, Paul Dalrymple. You are safe with the money we sinned so deeply for. Cold-blooded, treacherous wretch! There were times when I saw glimpses of your subtlety, your demoniacal subtlety, but I would not let my instinct warn me."

The other laughed low in derision.

"You certainly were a loss to the stage, Fred. With careful early training and some useful provincial experience, you might have graduated well and become a successful exponent of Shakespeare underdone. I am sorry that I did you an injustice."

"What do you mean?"

"Thirty shillings a week would be too little for you. An enterprising manager might venture safely on an extra eightpence per night."

Stung by the taunt, Fred dragged away the table, and would have leaped on Dalrymple, but the cold gleam of the pistol-barrel met his gaze, and the sharp ominous click of the trigger told him that the weapon was set and ready for use.

"Always on guard, you see," smiled Paul. "You had better take your seat again, my boy, and we will see what arrangement can be made. For the sake of our old friendship, I should be sorry to end such a promising career."

"Paul Dalrymple," said Fred, "you must deal fairly with me. I see your purpose, and you will have to change. You think you have me in your power, and you have. It was your idea that when I found you had deserted me I should accept my destiny and struggle on as best I could."

Dalrymple assented to that with a little complimentary nod to Fred for his penetration.

"You remember the terms on which we parted," said Fred, "when I gave my consent to the iniquitous scheme you planned out?"

"Be kind enough to refresh my memory."

"I will," Fred was perfectly calm now. Hardship and remorse had changed the handsome, gay-hearted boy into a man not easily governed when his nerves were strung together. "You have deceived me from first to last. I am sure that you had deliberately planned poor Bryant's death long before you gave him the poison that you assured me was only a sleeping draught."

"Well."

"When that tragedy was over, and it was too late to retreat, you proposed this plan. You were to get the gold conveyed secretly to England, and take care of it for both of us, while I remained behind on a pretended search for Bryant. After a certain time had elapsed I was to return, tell my guardian that he had escaped pursuit, and then we were to share the money."

"You have an excellent memory."

"Well, then, I have come to claim my share."

"Too large a sum to part with," said Dalrymple, calmly. "Besides, you will not want it. You see how well my plans were laid. I can keep the whole amount without injury to you; for you can go to Mr. Dacre and say that Bryant is lost for ever, as he is, and Mr. Dacre will restore you to your old position. Welcome back the fatted calf—I beg pardon, I meant the prodigal son."

"I dare not face him," said Fred; "he is too keen,

and would get the truth from me—I could not keep it from him."

"An amiable weakness from which it is unreasonable to expect me to suffer. Mr. Dacre would not suspect you, and I am perfectly in his confidence. I visit the house, and see your sister there. What a glorious girl she is, Fred. I am willing to do something for you for her sake. I think I shall win her."

"I would rather see her dead. I would save her from you if I sacrificed my own life in doing so."

"Your brotherly affection will not be tested so severely. She loves me."

"False."

"More than true. Your sister came to stay here for a week, Fred, and she learned to love me so well that she married me. So you see if, at any moment, you have an idea of giving yourself up and denouncing me, you denounce your sister's husband, and break her heart."

"This is not true," said Fred, under his breath. "You have not been such a villain."

"Ask her—write to her and see what she will say. I told you that I loved her years ago, and I would have risked more than life and soul to make her mine."

There was the earnestness of terrible truth in every word. Fred shuddered as he thought of that fair and lovely girl in the arms of that ruthless man of crime.

"And I cannot tell her what you are," he said, with remorseful agony. "I dare not for her sake give you up to just retribution. Paul Dalrymple, you have mastered me so far; but mark me, from this hour I devote myself to the task of bringing you to your doom."

"Thanks," said Paul, sarcastically; "as I appear to be enacting the heavy villain in this little tragedy, will you kindly tell me when I am to begin to tremble?"

"You will find me a sleepless enemy. I will hang upon your track like a Nemesis, fetter your footsteps, clog your course; go which way you may you will find an unseen influence at work—a hand striking you in the dark. You see I speak with a calm and settled purpose, and I will keep my promise."

"Very well," said Dalrymple, with a composure that was not all real; "only remember the risk you run. I have been in England some time now, and can account for every shilling I possess; you, on the other hand, have been hiding away on a pretended search for Bryant; there is your own letter written to your guardian, every line in it a condemnation."

"I shall find a way to reach you," said Fred, rising to go. "I would have forgiven everything but your diabolical treachery in marrying my sister. You have an enemy in me, you will have another in John Lenmore. I know you despise me because you have found me weak. You know him better."

"Mr. Frederick Amory," said Paul, opening a pocket-book, "for Lizzie's sake I forgive your threats, and give you one chance of escape. Here are two hundred pounds; if, in two days hence, you write to me from town, I will send you eight hundred more; if in twenty hours time I do not receive a telegram from you saying that you have left England, the police will be on your track and you will be arrested."

"For what?"

"The murder of Mr. Bryant, on your own confession made to me. You know me, and I mean it, every word."

Fred took the money quietly. His face set like stone, and he uttered no word, but he looked at Paul with a glance full of stern and dangerous meaning. At the door he turned, looked at him again with the same set gaze, and then he went from the house.

CHAPTER XXI.

Do you not hold me the worst heart in the world? Nay, you must needs; but say not yet you do. I am worn so weak, I know not how I live; Reach me your hand.
Chastelard.

WHEN Frederick Amory was gone, Mr. Dalrymple reflected on the latter portion of the interview. When a man begins to know his own weaknesses it is a sure sign that he is growing strong; and that Fred began to know the falling points in his own nature was quite evident.

"I did not like that look of his," said Paul to himself, "it was too quiet, too full of meaning. I had rather he had been furious and violent, but quietude in a man like Fred means mischief."

Dalrymple began to doubt whether his judgment of young Amory's disposition was rightly based. Men of strong intellect are rather apt to over-estimate their own power, and underrate the power of others. During the whole time of his intercourse with Fred, Dalrymple had found him irresolute, easily led, too good natured to say an honest "No" when he was wanted to say "Yes." It was to this

reckless good nature that Fred owed all his trouble. It was that same reckless good nature that had given Dalrymple so much influence over him.

But a strong change had taken place since last night—since they last met.

Paul Dalrymple could not shut his eyes to the fact that his dupe was no longer a simple-hearted boy. He was now a man with a purpose, the strongest purpose that, next to love, can exist in human hearts—the purpose of revenge.

"But we shall see," Dalrymple went on; "he will do nothing while the money lasts, and when that is gone he will send to me for more. He may in an angry moment screw up his courage, but would subside before he put his purpose into action; like most educated rascals."

Dalrymple had a very easy sophistry of his own, and he consoled himself for his treachery to Fred by thinking that his measures were so well taken, that Fred could still return to his guardian and be restored to his old position.

On the same principle he satisfied his conscience by thinking that, although he had plundered Mr. Dacre of the proceeds of his colonial property, Mr. Dacre had plenty and to spare in the Thorpendean estate, an estate which, but for a point of law, Paul might have inherited.

The one thing that disquieted him most was Fred's mention of John Lenmore.

Paul had an instinctive dislike and an instinctive fear of John Lenmore. He knew that if once John Lenmore's solid and reflective strength were pitted against his own subtlety, the chances would be seriously against him.

Fred could tell John Lenmore everything, without fear of betrayal. The adventurer began to think that it would have been better had he met his dupe in a different spirit. He had been unwise in letting loose the slow malice of his nature on one who, if rendered desperate, might work him so much injury.

"I must win Lizzie," he soliloquised, "and take her to another land, where I can teach her to forget the past, and make her love all mine. While we are here I am not safe, and she never can be happy. There are too many memories of others who have been dear to her."

He conjured up a bright picture, sitting there, with the quiet autumn sky above him. The wretched man who had just left him was forgotten, and he, whose soul was so deeply stained with crime, dared to dream of a fair future, passed in the land that he loved—the land that gave his mother birth. He had seen it in his boyhood, and could remember it yet, though the remembrance was dim. The man was gifted, and might, had he not perverted his fine intellect, have won happiness and an honourable name.

He had no coarse vices; his tastes were delicate; he liked the poetic and artistic beauty of all things. Had the wealth at his command been honourably gained—had Lizzie loved him willingly, the future that he dreamed of might have been a paradise. As it was, he commenced already to pay the penalty of sin. The secret haunted him; the shadow of a Nemesis hung over his head, unseen but not unfelt. There was a warning and a menace in that last long silent look Fred gave him. Daring as he was, he knew that he could not live in the midst of such danger for ever. There was Fred, there was Mr. Harperley, and there was John Lenmore.

He did not know one hour from another but that he might be brought to bay.

When Fred left The Croft he went by natural impulse towards Thorpendean. He was well disguised, and even had he not been, he had almost outgrown recognition. He longed to have a look at the dear, dear old home where he had been so happy.

He stood at a little distance from the Lodge and gazed at it with folded arms, while his heart filled with tender recollections.

Every window in the house was to him a chapter in a tender and touching story; at one he had sat when a child, and wondered at the beauty of the stars,—at another he had sat with Lizzie, when Lizzie was a blue-eyed little girl, and they had told their bright day-dreams to each other. From another he had looked out upon the fertile fields and lovely landscape scenery; the dearer to him now, because fields and scenery were full of memories, home memories, and from that home he must henceforth be an exile.

Then he could picture the sweet face of Mildred, as he had seen it when years ago he stood where he stood in this sad hour—years ago, when he began to be dimly conscious that in the sweet face of Mr. Dacre's daughter there was more than a sister's love for him.

It was hard to think of this, and know that he was, and must for evermore be an outcast. He did not deny that he had been much to blame, that his own headlong folly and reckless dissipation he was

indebted for his misery; remorse and self-reproach did not make his lot easier to bear.

"But for him, the bitter cause of this, there shall be bitter retribution," he said, in stern self-communion; "the suffering is not to be all mine."

Vengeful as his thoughts were, the sight of home softened him, and tears thickened in his eyes. He left the old place with a lingering gaze, and took his way towards Glen Farm. It was with the same intention that had brought him to the Lodge. Glen Farm had been a second home to him, and the Lenmores were more like his own kindred than strangers.

"Had I been content, like honest, steady Will," he pondered, "or brave and firm of purpose, like John, what a different fate mine would have been; and now I have nothing to think of but the wreck I have made, the ruin I have wrought—sacrificed my sister to a villain, plundered my kind-hearted guardian, broken John Lenmore's hope of happiness, and branded myself with deepest infamy,—truly if those whom I have most deeply wronged could read my heart, they would pity more than they would condemn."

When he was near Glen Farm, just when the gables came in sight above the trees, he saw a lady in the lane; he knew her at once, and his soul's thrill found utterance in the whisper of one word:

"May!"

It was May Lenmore, changed only to have gained a more thoughtful kind of beauty, more womanly grace. The desire to speak to her, to hear of his friends, and find, perhaps, what place he held in her memory, grew strong upon him, and he walked more slowly as she drew near.

"Pardon me," he said "can you tell me how far I am from Thorpendean?"

May stopped and looked at him; his voice had deepened since they last met, but in a few tones of a voice she had heard so frequently, there was enough of the old ring to render it familiar.

John Lenmore's sister had been thinking of Fred, but it was as of one far away. There was that in the expression of this stranger's eyes, in his speech, in his very attitude, that reminded her of some one, but she could not remember whom.

"Thorpendean," she said, "it is some few miles from here, sir."

"Will you kindly tell me in which direction?"

The girl looked over to the lofty hills, trying to think how to direct him best, and at that time he had the opportunity of watching her face; the dark brown eyes, the tremulous red lips, the whole contour of sweetness had never seemed so beautiful to him.

"If you take the path beyond the windmill there," she said, "and then go across the meadows, keeping the left hand line of footpath, you will come to the Lodge on the hill."

"The Lodge—that, if I do not mistake, is where Mr. Dacre lives?"

"Yes, sir."

"And the windmill belongs to Glen Farm?"

"Yes; that is my home."

"Indeed; I am not quite a stranger in these parts, for I have heard so much of them from an old colonial friend of mine."

May looked at him again and quickly.

"A Mr. Dalrymple. It is his house I have been trying to find."

"The 'I have been trying to find,' was an evasion that he used in preference to telling a direct falsehood to the pretty playmate of his boyhood."

"Mr. Dalrymple," said May, with a sigh of disappointment; "he lives at The Croft, and you have just come that way."

"Have I? Well, I had an invitation there. I knew him at the Cape, when I met him with a friend of his a—Mr.—let me see—Aymore, no, but something like that, Aymore—Aymer."

"Amory," suggested May.

"Amory, yes, that is it—Mr. Frederick Amory, I think; a wild young fellow, people said, with not much good in him."

Pretty little May looked at the stranger, thinking: "What right had he to speak so of one she had long since found out that she loved very dearly?"

"That is the way, sir," she said, with a graceful air of hauteur that agreed with the occasion; "if you keep to the path you cannot miss it."

"Thanks! Good evening."

"Good evening, sir."

He left him with such an air of indignation that he could not for an instant doubt its cause, and his heart was glad, for he felt that, wild and outcast as he was, there still remained one who was true to the affection of his childhood.

He let her go twenty steps or so, and in the time he took off his black beard; it was a false one. At the same moment he crammed a well-fitting wig into

his hat. Then he spoke aloud the one word he had whispered:

"May!"

John Lenmore's sister turned round with a glad, wistful cry that told him all he wanted to know. He was recognised—he was loved! He had but to open his arms, and she sprang into them, sobbing out:

"Fred!—dear, darling Fred!—I knew it was you; and it was so cruel of you."

(To be continued.)

CAB FARES.

PUBLIC attention having been drawn to Mr. Haddan's system of cab fares by Mr. Crawford, it may interest our readers if we can explain to them the principles of this system, and the advantages to be derived from its adoption. In the first place, no one will venture to say that the present system works well or is incapable of amendment. It will be evident to the most superficial observer how useless it is to use the mile as the basis of payment; for, as no one can tell exactly when the line has been traversed, doubts and dissensions of all sorts arise, both vexatious to the public and decidedly injurious to the driver. The cab tariff, to be useful, must, like omnibus fares, be clear and decisive, so that no possibility of dispute can ever arise; and Mr. Haddan has endeavoured to compass these advantages.

Mr. Haddan has compiled his system of fares on the following basis:—That the fares must be definite, in all cases sanctioned by law, and capable of being understood by any one not possessing even the least knowledge of London or English. That no calculation, even of the simplest kind, is to be left to the public or the driver. That the fares should not be rated only at so much a mile; for going up hill, through crowded thoroughfares, to parts of town where back fares are rare, must all be taken into consideration if we wish the fares to be just; and yet, notwithstanding, the public must on no account have to make these calculations for themselves.

All these apparently difficult and complicated desiderata have been met by Mr. Haddan in his work entitled 'The Course System,' which simply consists of the area within the four-mile radius, divided into 37 divisions, each division being distinguished by a letter or figure. All the gas lamps in each division are to be labelled with the distinguishing letter of that division, so that literally all the public will have to do in order to ascertain the exact legal fare from any one point to another, is to note the letter on the lamp where they start from, and also on arrival to perform the same operation, referring to the table for the fare between those two letters.

A cab, for example, is hired near a lamp bearing a letter H label and is discharged near one bearing a letter W label. Required the fare—refer to table, H to W—2s.

The fare is in all cases to be judged from and to the lamp-post in the direction of the horse's head.

The labels are to consist of a perforated letter attached to the glass of the lamp, and will thus be easily distinguishable by night or day.

The table of fares, which consists of one sheet, 9in. by 6in., shows all the fares from division to division, and is to be fixed, like the present plate, within every cab. Each fare before being inserted in the table is judged on all its merits, and not by the distance only, and though this mode of computation is more difficult in the compilation of the table, it renders the fares more exact and just, but so far as the public are concerned, the part they have to perform is always the same—viz., to see from the table what the fare is between any two lamp-posts, a process entirely devoid of all calculation.

It will be seen on reference to Mr. Haddan's tables and map that it is impossible to hire or discharge a cab anywhere within the four-mile radius without being able to ascertain the exact fare, and that beyond dispute.

In the members' cloak-room of the House of Commons a large map of London, divided on Mr. Haddan's system, is now to be seen; and tables of fares, printed on a card, only four inches by three inches, and intended to be carried by every policeman for public reference when necessary, can also be obtained there gratis.

MR. GLADSTONE, the member for Greenwich, will not permit the whitebait dinner to be eaten at that once famed locality. There is to be no such gathering this year or henceforth, we hear.

LORD DERBY is negotiating for the purchase of Holwood, a beautiful estate in Kent, not far from Bromley, and which is in several ways interesting. In the first place, and this no doubt mainly induces Lord Derby to wish to become its

possessor, Holwood is at present the residence of the Dowager Marchioness of Salisbury, who rents it from the representatives of the last owner, the late Lord Cranworth, and who is much attached to it as a home. Then, too, it was the favourite residence of William Pitt, who was born at the great Chatham's seat of Hayes, a few miles off. When a boy, Pitt used to go bird's-nesting to the woods of Holwood, and then determined to become its owner whenever he could. His ambition was gratified in 1785, during the years of his Premiership. In the grounds of Holwood there is still pointed out what is called "Pitt's oak," conspicuous for its gnarled and projecting root, which was his favourite seat. Another is known as "Wilberforce's oak," the same commemorated in the philanthropist's diary as "the old tree at Holwood just above the deep descent into the vale of Keston," sitting on the root of which with Pitt, he was advised by the latter, and first resolved to take up the question of the slave-trade. Amid the numerous embarrassments which clouded the statesman's later years he was compelled to part with Holwood, and a subsequent proprietor pulled down the house which had been his, and erected the present mansion, of the usual suburban type, now containing only one memorial of Pitt—his writing-table. It would be pleasant if Lord Derby were to become the possessor of a place which is thus associated with the memory of William Pitt, and which, from its contiguity to London, would be a convenient sojourn for a steady frequenter of Parliament. By selecting for his wife's title the name of Burke's classic residence at Beaconsfield, Mr. Disraeli, too, has connected himself with the memory of a great statesman.

SUMMER PINCHING OF FRUIT TREES.

Now is the time when some attention must be given to this extremely important operation in the cultivation of all small and formally-trained fruit trees in the villa garden. Summer pinching is simply a summer pruning of the shoots, instead of doing pruning in winter, as is a common enough practice. It is a far more simple and more easily performed operation, and further, it is greatly more conducive to the production of fruit than winter pruning. To prune in winter we require a knife, but to prune in summer, the thumb and finger only.

The tendency of winter pruning also is towards increased luxuriance, and the production of more shoots. That of summer stopping, judiciously done, towards the production of fruit. By stopping the growing shoots in summer, we arrest the flow of the sap in that particular direction, which must then of course flow elsewhere. Understanding this, therefore, we are enabled, by stopping the stronger portions first, to give encouragement to the weaker; and so regulate and modulate the forces of the tree to uniform action throughout. The natural tendency of trees is to grow upwards, and for the top shoots to grow the strongest. They must therefore be kept in subjection, to allow fair play to the lower and weaker. This is done by pinching, inducing uniform action, and consequently an equal degree of fertility on every part.

The pinching of the young shoots should be begun early, and performed gradually. If the trees have attained the desired size, the shoots of the apples and pears on the pyramid and bush trees may be stopped at about three inches, and of cherries and plums even closer. At the first pinching, only the upper and stronger growing shoots should be stopped, and then a few days later the next stronger portion, and a week after the remainder. It is extremely bad practice to allow a great mass of shoots to grow up, and then to denude the tree of them all at once. It completely paralyses its action, and is exceedingly injurious. The second growths on the shoots which have been pinched should be persistently stopped, close to the place where first pinched, as soon as they make their appearance. These second growths being produced from the two or three topmost buds of the shoots, the lower do not start; but being fully exposed to the influence of the sun and air, in general become a mass of fruit buds.

With pyramid trees the shoots on the lower portion should be allowed to grow a little longer than on the upper, and the same remark applies to cordons. The shoots nearest the base should be a little longer than those at the extremities. This tends to give equality of growth.

Very little skill, only a little time, and some perseverance, is required in the summer pruning of fruit trees. All that is requisite to remember are the following, which may be called golden rules for villa gardeners—to stop the strongest shoots first, to begin early, and perform it gradually; and by so doing, there are few trees indeed which will not assume a fruitful condition.—X.



[SIR JAMES CLARK, K.C.B., M.D., F.R.S.]

THE LATE SIR JAMES CLARK, M.D.

It is a rather remarkable coincidence that literature, politics, and medical science have recently lost by death their most eminent representative men—Dickens, Clarendon, Simpson, and Clark. Portraits of Charles Dickens and the Earl of Clarendon have already appeared in our pages, and this week we give the portrait of Sir James Clark, Physician in Ordinary to the Queen, whose death occurred on the 29th ult.

Sir James Clark was the elder of the two sons of Mr. David Clark, a farmer of Findlater, in the county of Banff; his mother was Isabella, daughter of Mr. John Scott, of Glasshaugh, North Britain. He was born at Findlater, on the 14th of December, 1783. He received his rudimentary instruction at the Grammar-school of Fordyce, and his more advanced education at King's College, Aberdeen, from which, many years afterwards, he received his degree of M.A. He subsequently studied medicine at the University of Edinburgh, and passed his examination at the College of Surgeons of that city and also of London. At the end of his university career he entered the navy as an assistant surgeon, and remained afloat until 1815, when he returned to Edinburgh, resumed his interrupted studies, and in 1817 took his degree of M.D. Dr. Clark next devoted some time to foreign travel, and eventually settled down at Rome in 1820, where he practised as a physician for eight or nine years.

During his residence abroad he laid the foundation of the medical experience which secured him his subsequent high position. He made himself practically acquainted with the chemical constitution of most of the mineral springs of the Continent, and carefully studied their several influences on diseases, and he had the opportunity of observing the effects of climate on the diseases connected with the lungs, and especially on consumption in its

various forms. At Rome, Dr. Clark made the acquaintance of Prince Leopold of Saxe-Coburg, which led eventually to his appointment as physician to that prince on his settling in England.

Two years after his return to England Dr. Clark was appointed Physician to St. George's Parochial Infirmary. In 1823 he published a work on the 'Sanative Influence of Climate,' which has passed through several editions, and is still in high repute. In 1832 he was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society, and he was repeatedly chosen a member of its council. In 1835 he published a "Treatise on Pulmonary Consumption and Scrofulous Diseases," and certainly he was among the first to prove that the rise of these diseases was due to a deterioration of the system itself and a weakening of the powers of vitality. On the death of Dr. Maton he was appointed Physician to Her Majesty, at that time Princess Victoria; and on her accession to the throne he was appointed First Physician in Ordinary to the Queen. He was subsequently, on her Majesty's marriage, also made physician in ordinary to the Prince Consort, and from that time till his death was a highly esteemed and trusted counsellor at Court; his versatile accomplishments and fine scientific talent being of much value to the Prince, who, it is said, continually sought his advice in those various projects which engaged so much of his Royal Highness's time and attention. But while thus basking in the sunshine of Court favour and influence, Dr. Clark did not lose sight of the interests of his profession. He contributed much by his example and counsel to improve the literature of medicine, and co-operated effectively with the late Sir John Forbes, another Court physician, in the establishment and conduct of the *Medico-Chirurgical Review*.

In 1837, soon after the accession of Her Majesty, Dr. Clark was created a baronet of the United Kingdom.

On the foundation of the University of London,

Dr. Clark was chosen a member of the Senate of that body, and he then produced his pamphlet on 'Clinical Instruction.' The defects in British medical education which he pointed out in this publication have since been remedied, more especially since the University of London has made the examination at the bedside an essential part of the examination of candidates for degrees in medicine and surgery.

To the 'Cyclopaedia of Practical Medicine' Sir James contributed a valuable paper on 'Change of Air;' he was the author also of numerous other papers in the journals devoted to medical science; and took great interest in the establishment of the College of Chemistry.

Finding his health to be failing, Sir James Clark retired from public practice several years ago, and from that time he lived principally at Bagshot Park, which had been assigned to him by Her Majesty as a residence. But although he had withdrawn from general practice, he continued to attend Her Majesty and the younger members of the Royal Family, chiefly as consulting physician, down to a very recent date. To the last he took the deepest interest in every question connected with the improvement of the medical schools, the progress of hygienic measures, and the advancement of scientific knowledge, of which he had always been a zealous and consistent advocate; indeed, to his exertions may be attributed those hygienic measures which the Legislature has put into operation in our large towns and cities.

Sir James Clark married, in 1820, Barbara, only daughter of the late Rev. John Stephen, LL.D., by whom he had an only son, John Forbes, who now succeeds to his father's title. The new baronet was born in 1821, and was for some years in the diplomatic service at Vienna, Paris, Brussels, and Turin. He married, in 1851, Charlotte, only daughter of the late Hon. Sir Thomas J. Coltman, one of the Judges of the Court of Common Pleas.

A MOTHER'S LOVE.—Deep is the foundation of a mother's love. Its purity is like that of "the sweet perfume that breathes upon a bank of violets." The tear-drop speaks its tenderness. There is a language in her smile, but it betrays not all her nature. We have sometimes thought while gazing on her countenance, its dignity slightly changed by the sweet accents of her young child, as it repeated some endearing word, that the sanctuary of a mother's heart is fraught with untold virtues. So fondly, so devotedly, she listens to the child's words, it would seem she catches from them a spirit that strengthens the bonds of her affection. Did you ever awake, while on a bed of sickness, and find a mother's hand pressed closely upon your forehead? It is pleasant thus to break from a dream even when affliction is on you. You are assured that you have at least one friend; and that that friend is a true one. At such a time you can read more fully a mother's feelings than her tongue can express them. The anxiety with which she gazes upon you, the tenderness with which she supplies your wants, all serve to represent the secret workings of her heart. But a mother's love is unceasing. Who then can look coldly upon a mother? Who, after the unspeakable tenderness and care with which she has fostered him through infancy, guided him through childhood, and deliberated with him through the perplexities of opening manhood, can speak irreverently of a mother? Her claims to his affections are founded in nature, and cold must be the heart that can deny them.

A FRENCHMAN ON LONDON.—M. Charles Hugo, son of Victor, who has been paying London a visit, describes his impression in the *Rappel*. He found there "4,000,000 men, and not a single lounge. A feverish and phlegmatic circulation in a fog. Everyone rushing in pursuit of business, for time is money; the second is worth a shilling, the minute a guinea. Everything circulates pell-mell—the penny boat on the river, the waggon in the street. One has a railway overhead, another under foot; a railway to the right, a railway to the left. The Thames runs between two trains, one of which passes over, the other under the river. The penny boats have a locomotive under the chimney, and another under their wheels." We are then told that St. Paul's looks as if it were built of sugar, Westminster of pasteboard, and the Tower of London of dominoes. The police are dressed in green. Now and then there's a red soldier with his hair parted behind and a stick in his hand. High over the trees of Hyde Park rises the equestrian statue of Wellington, with his cocked hat under his arm. "Sugar all this over with 300,000 women of bad character, and you have London—a prodigious nightmare, where everything is of iron, mud, coal, and rain, where tunnels are suspended and bridges are subterranean, whose houses are tombs and shopkeepers phantoms. *Chinoiserie de l'épicerie, Sodome de la bank note, Gomorrah du coton, Babylone de la cassonade!*" The note of admiration which follows Babylon of brown sugar is by M.

Charles Hugo, who then proceeds to tell us how he visited Louis Blanc, who lives in one of the best quarters of London, and had to pay five shillings for half-an-hour's mad gallop—"that is, 71. 25c." He dined with Louis Blanc, and met Mr. Smalley, who is an amiable man. The conversation turned on Rochefort and Florens, and M. Louis Blanc assured his guests that the latter had always expressed the greatest repugnance for political assassination. It was remarked, however, that Napoleon I., founder of the present dynasty, had installed the statue of Brutus in the Tuilleries when first consul, and had left a sum of money in his will to Cantillon, who had fired at Wellington. The next day M. Louis Blanc took M. Hugo to the Tower, where they saw all the Crown jewels but the Koh-i-noor, that famous diamond, stolen from India, which the Queen keeps hidden in a drawer, so as to have 10,000,000*fr.* in her pocket in case of a revolution. In the courtyard the spot where Bolleyn was beheaded was pointed out. "And they reproach us with '98!" sighed Louis Blanc.

LADY BARBARA.

CHAPTER XIII.

FOR a moment, as she stood there on the wave-washed pier, in the grasp of her enemy, the imminence of her deadly peril held the Lady Barbara speechless, motionless, paralysed.

"Only one word, Barbara," said the villainous colonel, his voice sounding to her benumbed hearing like the hiss of a venomous serpent. "One word, and I will go before Lord Champney comes out. Speak!"

The man's moustache again brushed her cheek. His breath, as he bent his evilly triumphant face yet nearer to her, ceased her lips.

A sound came from the interior of the boat-house. "He is coming!" whispered Effingham, holding her yet more closely.

The sound—the words—broke in upon the benumbed senses of the Lady Barbara with the startling force of a cannon boom.

The appalled look died out of her face, the lightning leaped to her eyes, and all the haughty indignation of her soul was visible in her countenance and manner.

Her terrible peril had burst upon her in its full meaning.

With a quick, electric spring, she tore herself from his grasp. Then, more from impulse than reason, she put her two hands full against the breast of her enemy, and sent him whirling backward into the water.

Effingham sent up a wild cry of rage and alarm.

It was still echoing on the air when the Lady Barbara, turning, sped up the rocky staircase with the speed of a startled deer, not pausing until she had gained the green lawn above, and was safely screened from all view below by the massive stone balustrade.

Then, white and panting, she sank down for a moment upon a garden chair to rest.

Effingham, realising that she had escaped him for this time, and that his diabolical purpose was completely defeated, wisely made up his mind to avoid an encounter with Lord Champney.

"No use of taking the blame without the game," he thought, spluttering and striking out for the pier, from which he was a few feet distant. "I don't want to meet that jealous demon without I am going to make something by it. Most of all, I don't want to meet him while I'm in this fix. If he knew that his wife pushed me in, it would go far to heal all their differences. He must have heard my outcry. Yes, he's coming!"

Loosing his hold of the stones of the pier, Effingham struck out boldly through the water, swam to the seaward side of the boat-house, and clung there to a trailing chain, his person being almost entirely submerged.

He was thus hidden from observation from the shore.

The movement had not been effected too soon, if he desired to avoid being seen by Lord Champney.

He had scarcely taken hold of the chain, when the small door of the boat-house opened on the pier, and Lord Champney looked out, half startled, half wondering.

"I thought I heard some one calling," he said, half aloud. "But there's no one within sight. My hearing has deceived me."

He waited a little to be quite sure, but heard no sound save the ripple of the waves.

Then, quite satisfied that he had been mistaken, his lordship went back into the boat-house, and ascended to its upper chamber, which he loved to frequent, knowing that it was his wife's favourite retreat.

Effingham remained hidden for a little while be-

hind the boat-house, but as Lord Champney did not reappear, he moved about uneasily, muttering:

"Champney's gone upstairs to rest, I daresay. And I'm shivering here in the water, like a rat in a trap! Now is my time to beat a retreat!"

He suited the action to the word.

He swam around the boat-house again, and drew himself up on the stone pier, where he stood wet to the skin, and shivering as if with an ague.

"This is a pretty figure to cut!" he thought, angrily looking down at his clinging garments. "I wonder if Barbara can see me!"

He glanced up at the balustrade on the summit of the cliff, and fancied that he could distinguish the face of the Lady Barbara through the interstices of the stone balusters, and he even fancied that he could detect a mocking expression on her features.

He raised his clenched hand and shook it at her, as if registering an oath of vengeance.

"I'll be even with you, my lady!" he muttered, in a voice of suppressed fury. "You'll pay dearly for this humiliation of me! There'll be no relenting now in my schemes—no faltering in my plans! You will be mine yet, my lady, despite your cursed pride and your jealous demon of a husband!"

He shook the superfluous moisture from his garments, and then walked swiftly along the pier to the rocky stairs.

The sound of his footsteps, cautious though they were, attracted the attention of Lord Champney, who had thrown himself on the cane-work divan in the upper chamber of the boat-house, and now roused himself, leaning on his elbow, and listening.

"Stealthy steps!" said his lordship. "Some prowler, startled by my return, and making his escape! Barbara has just been here, for there's her book and fan on the floor. Can it be that she is flying stealthily to avoid me, as she has been doing the last few days? I will know!" He sprang up, crossed the floor, and softly opened the slats of the shutters looking out.

He was just in time to see Effingham mounting the rocky stairs.

He recoiled as if shot.

"He here!" he gasped. "Effingham here? And with Barbara?"

His lips quivered under his moustache. Pallid and strengthless, he leaned against the shutters, watching that ascending figure with an appalled gaze.

"She has been here, and so has he!" Lord Champney muttered. "The room looks as though they had fled hastily at my approach. Barbara's fan and book are on the floor. I disturbed the two, it seems, while they were prating their love! This, then, is their place of meeting in secret! How indignant Barbara was that I should suspect her of being false to me! That woman would deceive an angel. Oh-h! I could kill them both!"

He grated his teeth together, and glared out at Effingham's figure with maddened eyes.

He would have dashed after him then, for murderous thoughts were surging in his breast, but that the shock had made him as weak as a little child.

"I will bide my time!" he said. "I will be as watchful, as keen, as untiring as a sleuth-hound. And when I come upon the two together—then—"

The glaring look in his eyes, the sudden clenching of his hands, finished the sentence better than words could have done.

Meanwhile, unconscious of his lordship's burning gaze, Colonel Effingham mounted the stairs in the rock, and came to a momentary halt upon the lawn.

The Lady Barbara, who had beheld his approach, had vanished. Effingham could see the flutter of her dress as she hurried to the garden.

He looked after her with a sardonic smile, and sat down in the seat she had vacated.

"The next step is to widen the breach between this amiable couple," he mused, "and then I will step in between them and carry off my prize, my beautiful, scornful Barbara! Wamer said that he knew she loved me, but that her indomitable pride and her fear of her husband stood between us like a bulwark of stone. Well, I like to batter down obstacles. I'll win her and humble her, let what will stand in my way! Nobody ever yet frightened me from my game!"

He laughed to himself—a low, noiseless sort of laugh.

"The best thing to do next is to drop the note Wamer wrote for me, with an eye to this disposition of it, in the way of Lord Champney. It would probably disgust him with his wife and cause him to leave her again, thus giving me a clear field! And, in any case, it will make him so cold and harsh to her, that she will begin to think seriously of love and peace with me. Ah, Wamer is a clever fellow, and an able conjuror. It was he who first set me on this tack, and he's helped me not a little!"

He took from his pocket his note-book. It was wet. He opened it, and drew from its inner pocket a little

crumpled note, over which he glanced with a smile of satisfaction.

"It's dry," he said. "It's just the thing for this occasion. We'll see how it will work."

A noise from the direction of the boat-house caused him to look that way.

Lord Champney was just stepping out upon the pier.

The villain saw at once, from his lordship's appearance, that his retreat had been seen, and that his lordship was greatly excited.

"He's in one of his frightful rages that Wamer has told me of," observed Effingham coolly. "He's not a pleasant object to look upon. I believe I'll step out of his way. I'd about as soon face a mad elephant, or an infuriated lion. I'll just leave this interesting little document for him to look at."

He dropped the note, half-opened, upon the lawn, and hurried swiftly towards the lodge, a clump of larches soon intercepting him from view at that point.

He had scarcely vanished when Lord Champney mounted the steps, and moved towards the mansion with rapid, nervous strides.

He had proceeded but a few paces, when he caught sight of the paper on the grass.

He halted instinctively, and picked it up.

"Barbara's writing!" he said huskily. "A note! To whom?"

He looked at it. The very first sentence held him spellbound, and compelled him to continue its perusal.

He could have sworn that the handwriting was that of Barbara, his wife. And, "to make assurance doubly sure," her name was appended to the letter.

Lord Champney sat down on the chair the Lady Barbara, and subsequently Effingham, had occupied, and studied the treacherous missive, which Wamer had penned and Effingham had purposely dropped in his lordship's way.

"MY DEAREST ALBERT"—Lord Champney read aloud in a low and husky voice—"I received your lovely bouquet, and the delicious note accompanying it; but both had like to have been my ruin, for it was Lord Champney who placed the flowers in my hand, and I had need of all my powers of dissimulation and all my capabilities of getting up a display of mock indignation at his insulting suspicions, to prevent his getting at a knowledge of the truth, I do assure you."

"Ah!" interpolated Lord Champney, grinding his teeth.

"However," he continued, reading, "that danger was met and safely passed. His lordship knows not what to think, yet he is greatly impressed by my indignation and haughty denials of wrong-doing. In fact, he is becoming completely hoodwinked."

"The cheat! The deceitful creature! But it's no more than I expected!" said his lordship, wiping his brow.

The letter shook in his hand, as he resumed:

"In regard to your proposition, dear Albert, I know not what to say. I cannot fly from my home, dearly as I love you. I prefer instead a divorce from my husband, and then we can marry. Saltair belongs to me. I inherited it from my father. With you, instead of my jealous watch-dog, Saltair would be, as you love to call it, an Eden! Meet me at the boat-house on Tuesday, at five o'clock, and we will talk over the most feasible plans of driving Lord Champney to the divorce court. Once free, dearest Albert, I will become in truth your own. The days and the hours seem long between this and Tuesday. Be cautious. He will, probably, be out for a sail; yet do not fail to be very careful, for he is already jealous of you. My darling, accept my tenderest love."

BARBARA.

It was scarcely to be wondered at that the peculiar nature of Lord Champney should have been fired by this letter into the wild blaze of an awful despair.

"Good Heavens! And I have worshipped that woman!" he said to himself, in a hollow whisper. "Every time when I have met her eyes or looked on her face, I have doubted my own convictions of her falsity. Oh, if I could only hate her! One thing is certain, she shall never drive me into seeking a divorce. She shall never have her freedom to marry Effingham—never!"

He sat there in the sunshine a long time, but at last arose feebly, and moved along the walks, unconsciously taking his way to the flower-garden.

For a little while he strolled up and down the perfumed and shaded paths, the letter hidden in his bosom, and his arms crossed above it, with no thought but of this great grief, which had come to him.

But at last the various sounds of the summer afternoon obtruded themselves upon his hearing. The soft plash of the waves, the hum of bees, and the singing of birds were heard; and finally,

under or above all these sounds, he heard the broken murmur of a woman's passionate weeping. He listened with a breathless intensity. The sound came from a small embowered summer-house near at hand.

Lord Champney softly moved towards it, and parting the vines that drooped over its entrance, stood in its portal.

It was a dim and shadowy little covert, a green recess suited to a fairy queen, with long green sprays and tendrils, and great clustering blossoms dropping through the lattice bars, at the top and at the sides. A bench ran along either side in this picturesque little structure; and upon one of these benches the Lady Barbara was sitting, or half crouching, in an attitude of the profoundest grief.

Her face was buried in her hands. Her form was shaking with passionate sobs. Never in his life had Lord Champney seen her exhibit an emotion and a despair like this.

In the midst of his rage and anger there crept for the first time an element of pity.

"Barbara!" he said, softly, his voice trembling. She started with an inarticulate cry.

"Sidney!" she ejaculated, in a panic. "Look up, Barbara!"

She uncovered her face, and did as he commanded, disclosing her pale, passionate face, stained with tears, and her eyes half wild with weeping.

The husband's heart yearned over her. He gripped the letter in his bosom tightly, as if that gave him strength.

"Barbara," he said, in the same hushed voice he had before employed; "I know all!"

"You know all?" repeated her ladyship, wonderingly.

"Yes. I saw Colonel Effingham from the boat-house chamber, as he climbed up the cliff stairs!"

The lady's pale face was stained with a swift scarlet.

"Sidney!" she cried, half-haughtily. "Is this another insult? Have I not borne enough?"

"Answer me, Barbara. Have you not seen Colonel Effingham to-day?"

"Yes," she answered, faintly.

"In the boat-house parlour, where you and I used to sit in the early days of our marriage, before we were estranged?"

"Yes, Sidney," she faltered, "but—"

"Never mind your excuses, Barbara. It is enough! I am glad you did not deny the truth, for I found your book and fan on the floor, and I saw Effingham creeping stealthily along the pier, endeavouring to escape without being seen. I have found you out at last, Barbara. No fairer woman than you ever wore the mask of deceit!"

"Sidney, hear me! At least, let me speak in my own defence," cried the wife, passionately.

"It is useless, Barbara. I should not believe a word you said. I have lost faith in you utterly. The mask has been stripped from you, and I know you as you are—false, treacherous, cruel!"

The wife threw up her arms, with a wild and meaning cry.

"Oh, Sidney, Sidney!" she pleaded. "Hear me! I can explain! Colonel Effingham intruded upon me against my wishes. I rebuked him. I pushed him into the water!"

Lord Champney's lip curled in a terrible sneer.

"Don't romance, Barbara," he said sternly. "I tell you I do not believe a word you say!"

He expected to see her anger and indignation flash out at him, but instead she burst into a fit of passionate sobbing.

"I would to Heaven you were free, Barbara," he exclaimed. "Our marriage was a fatal mistake. It was like the union of fire and ice. It seemed once to me, to carry out the idea, that the fire might melt the ice—in other words, that my love and fervour might win you. But it was all of no use, Barbara," he added, sighing wearily. "And so you want a divorce?"

"If No—a thousand times—no! I had not dreamed of such a thing. It is you who want it, Sidney!"

"Madam, your prevarications and falsehoods are beyond parallel. I have in my pocket your last letter to your adored Albert. Permit me to restore it to you."

He handed her the missive. She looked it over in a stupor of amazement.

"I never saw it before, Sidney," she cried. "It is some vile forgery. Colonel Effingham has written this, forging my handwriting!"

"Indeed!" commented his lordship, with a terrible sarcasm. "Your explanation, madam, is clumsy. People don't do such things as forge love-letters in real life, and drop them about in such opportune places. I found that note on the lawn where you dropped it in your hasty flight just before my arrival. And how, may I ask, could Effingham imitate your handwriting unless he were favoured

with specimens of the original? You are convicted, madam. Your good fortune has deserted you."

"Sidney, will you not listen to me? I am innocent, believe me!" urged the Lady Barbara, in an extremity of anguish. "I hate Effingham!"

"Ah, that is overdone. 'Hate him,' when you grant him secret meetings! This affair of yours has gone further than I thought. Now, Barbara, I cannot agree to sue for a divorce. I cannot allow you to do so. My name shall never be drawn through the mire of the divorce court—never!

When I am gone you may marry Effingham as soon as you will; but while I live you must conform to the decent requirements of society. I am sorry for you, Barbara; but you may be happy yet," added his lordship, his blazing eyes softening under some strong emotion. "You are young, and these present clouds may be dissipated after a little!"

The change in his manner alarmed his wife.

"What do you mean, Sidney?" she demanded.

"You will know in good time. I am going away in a few hours, Barbara. Let us shake hands. It may be for the last time!"

The wife sprang to her feet, and rushed towards him, a great and undefinable fear swamping all her anger and indignation.

"Where are you going?" she asked.

"To Cromer. I am going to call upon Colonel Effingham. Either he or I must give way in this matter. But one man must love my wife!"

"You will fight him?"

"Yes!"

"But, Sidney, the colonel is a dead shot. He has fought two duels on the Continent, and killed his antagonist each time. And duelling is so wicked, so foolish. Do not go!"

"Is this anxiety for Effingham or for me?" asked Lord Champney, with a hard and bitter sneer. "I will pit my right against his wrong, let him be ever so dead a shot. I am going to meet him, Barbara, and one of us will not survive the meeting. If it is I who perish, you can marry to-morrow. Good-bye!"

He caught her hand in a vice-like pressure. Then he moved away, but came back and caught her in his arms and strained her to his heart, showering kisses upon her.

The next moment he hurried swiftly from the garden, moving towards the lawn, whence he made his way to the boat-house.

The Lady Barbara followed him with nervous haste, but when she had gained the cliff stairs, the little yacht was just putting out from the boat-house.

Lord Champney stood up in it, tall and dark and stern, and waved her a farewell. Then the shifting breeze swelled his sail, and the yacht stood out to sea.

He was gone on his mission of vengeance.

CHAPTER XIV.

As Felix Wamer's significant exclamation went through the little lodging-house parlour like a hiss, the glances of the two Nars followed that of Dora, resting upon the new-comer.

The young girl, feeling bitterly the contrast between her elegant and aristocratic lover, with all his caste prejudices, and these vulgar, ignorant and coarse persons, who claimed to be her parents, was mute with shame and a gathering dread.

Mrs. Narr, however, was equal to the occasion. Dora's emotion, or some instinct of her own, told her who he was. She accented him boldly:

"You are Mr. Wamer, ain't you?" she demanded, with an offensive familiarity. "The fellow that's been courting Dora up at Chessom Grange?"

"I am Mr. Wamer, madam," replied the visitor, not concealing his disgust of his questioner. "And who, if I may ask, are you?"

"My name's Narr—Catherine Narr," said the woman, volubly. "I'm Dora's mother!"

"Indeed!"

"Yes, and this here's her pa. Jack, speak up for yourself. Don't 'pear so shame-faced. This is the man we were speaking of—Mr. Wamer, cousin to Lord Champney. He'll be Lord Champney himself some day, and Dora'll be my lady!"

"Champney!" repeated Narr, with a sudden agitation. "What's he doing here? It's all up with us, Kat! It's all—"

"Now you hush!" interrupted his wife, savagely. "Didn't you understand me? This here stranger is Mr. Wamer as is going to marry Dora, and keep us all our lives in luxury! Do you understand now?"

The hunted look fled from Jack Narr's eyes. He drew a long breath of relief.

"Yes, I understand," he said. "How'd ye do, Mr. Wamer? Happy to make your acquaintance!"

He held out his grimy hand. Wamer looked at it contemptuously and closely, as if it had been a natural curiosity.

"Won't shake hands, eh?" exclaimed Narr, with a forced laugh. "It's just as well. But when you're one of the family, Mr. Wamer, I won't have any of these fine airs. Understand that. Whoever marries Miss Dora'll have to take us, or 'low us a good 'nity. That's been the calculation these seventeen years; ain't it, Kat?"

"You talk too much, as you always do when you're drunk, Jack," said Mrs. Narr. "But Mr. Wamer understands the matter now. No doubt he is enough in love with Dora to pay us a handsome annuity, and we'd agree to keep out of sight after the marriage. I ain't no call to go into fine society!"

Wamer, who carried his hatred of vulgarity to the verge of fastidiousness, was horrified at these relatives of the peerless and dainty Dora.

"My good people," he said, waving his white hand. "I came here to see—Miss Chessom. Be kind enough to leave me alone with her for a little while!"

"Not till we've come to some sort of an understanding!" exclaimed Mrs. Narr. "It's customary for rich folks to inquire what are the intentions of their daughter's visitors. Now I claim the same privilege. I want to know what are your intentions in regard to my daughter?"

Wamer pulled his tawny whiskers. He did not know what to reply.

"I'll tell you," he said, after a brief pause. "Leave me alone with Miss—Miss Chessom for half an hour, and then I'll tell you what my intentions are."

Narr's countenance beamed with sudden jollity.

"Understand, Kat?" he demanded, playfully poking his wife under her ribs. "He wants to ask the gal first. Sensible fellow! What's the use of his showing his hand till he sees what card Miss Dora's going to play? Oh, he's a sharp un!"

"That's well enough," assented Mrs. Narr, reflectively. "Jack and I'll go out for half an hour. We'll be sitting on the stairs and I'll be back punctual. Come, Jack!"

Narr winked his eye sportively at Wamer.

"It'll all go right with you, I'm thinking," he said, jauntily. "Miss Dora won't be hard on you—will you, Miss Dora? Wamer's a regular spoon—crazy to get down on his knees to you. Wish you good luck, son-in-law that is to be. Now lead on, old woman, and give these lovers a chance."

The Nars retired noisily, closing the door behind them, and retreated to Mrs. Narr's little room, the door of which they left open.

The two—Wamer and Dora—were left alone.

The young girl stood, pale and cold as a marble image, her black drapery falling around her like heavy shadows, her dark eyes full of a brooding trouble.

Wamer approached her, holding out his hand.

"Dora!" he said, gently.

"Well?" responded Dora, coldly.

"Is it thus you meet me, darling? Has your heart changed towards me in the few days since I told you my love in the old drawing-room at Chessom Grange, and you said, with blushes and smiles, you would be mine?"

"No, my heart has not changed," answered Dora, earnestly. "I like you as well as I did then; but everything else has changed, Felix. I am no longer an heiress. I am homeless, poor, and you have seen for yourself those who claim to be my parents."

"But I am not changed, Dora!" asserted Wamer, more fervently. "I love you just the same."

The girl's face grew radiant.

"Oh, Felix!" she breathed. "You are sure?"

"Quite sure!" and he smiled.

"And the poverty and the relatives do not weigh against me?" questioned Dora. "I have heard so much about the pride of titled people. I was afraid that you would not love me any longer. And I can't help my parentage, you know!"

"Of course not!" said Wamer, vaguely.

"It distresses me to live with them," said Dora, frankly. "I have been used to having refined people around me, and I cannot get used to their coarseness, drunkenness, and strange ways. I can't like them, Felix, if they are my parents. And it seems to me as though they could not be my own parents, but as if they had picked me up somewhere and passed me off for their own."

"A romantic idea!" said Wamer. "But the worst of it is, it's too improbable. You are their child fast enough."

Dora felt pained and chilled at the assurance, although she had tried hard to believe in their claims herself.

"I don't look like them," she murmured.

"That's no proof. But you've been brought up differently, Dora, and that makes great difference, you know."

"Papa used to say, 'Blood will tell.'"

"I presume it will, sometimes," said Wamer, indifferently. "I received your letter in due time, as I said, Dora, and I have hurried to you at the earliest

opportunity. Do you know, Dora, that mourning is becoming to you? You look like a calla-lily, surrounded by black shadows."

"Oh, don't, Felix!" said Dora, her eyes filling with tears. "I cannot bear allusion to my mourning yet. Poor papa—"

"Don't cry, Dora!" interposed Wamer, hastily. "I don't like to see a woman cry. And after all, Mr. Chessom wasn't your own father; so why spoil your eyes for him?"

"Felix!"

"You know I am speaking sound sense, Dora. 'I wouldn't shed a tear for a man who neglected to provide for you, as he did. There! there! Come and sit down, Dora, and let us have a good talk.'"

He led her to a seat, Dora submitting to his guidance.

She was conscious of a change in his manner since their last meeting. He was less tender and reverential, and more familiar and flippant. The change struck her unpleasantly.

"How exquisitely lovely you are, Dora!" he said, as if she had been a picture or a statue. "How such a glorious blossom could have sprung from such a stem, I cannot imagine."

The compliment jarred on Dora's sensitive soul. It did not seem to her an hour for idle compliments.

"You received my letter," said the young girl, tremulously, "and know that I offered you back your freedom. I urge you to accept it, Felix. I cannot go into your haughty family to be looked down upon. And wherever I go, these people will frequently intrude. We cannot keep them away, and your pride will be shocked often because of them; leave me to them and to my fate, Felix."

"Never!" cried Wamer, ardently. "I loved you, and I will not desert you. You shall be mine, Dora!"

A happy smile gathered about the girl's innocent mouth. A glad light shone in her eyes. It was worth all it had cost, she thought, to prove a love so true and loyal as this.

Wamer's love for her received a new impulse at sight of her great joy. He admired her as much as ever—he loved her even more—but his plans in regard to her had changed.

Pride was the backbone of his selfish and cruel nature. He felt that a marriage which would bring him into contact with the Narra was an impossibility. And then there entered into his evil heart a plot against Dora such as only a villain of the worst type could conceive.

"What are you doing here in London, Dora?" he inquired.

"Nothing. I came here because Edmund advised me. I expected to obtain pupils as a daily governess. Edmund gave me a letter to his promised wife, who would, he thought, interest herself in me."

"Then you have made no arrangements as yet for pupils?"

Dora answered in the negative.

"There is nothing to hinder your leaving here at once?"

"Nothing," said Dora, brightly.

"Of course we must cut these people—these Narra! They would be the death of me in a week. You will not want them with us?"

"Oh, no!" shuddered Dora.

"That is right. What do you say to leaving them this very evening? You can slip out while they are below, and I will meet you at the nearest corner with a cab. I left my affairs in Norfolk in such a state that I must be back there within a day or two. You are not afraid to trust yourself with me, my precious Dora?"

"Why should I be, Felix?" asked Dora, in the innocence of a loving trust. "Do you not love me?"

"Love you! I worship you. I idolise you. And you will go with me, Dora, in your innocent faith and the serene trust of a perfect love?"

"Yes, Felix."

Wamer's face shone with an evil glow. He deemed her won already to the schemes he had formed.

"I will take you to Norwich to have you near me," he said, folding his arm around her waist. "I will find you the prettiest lodgings, and visit you every day, and lavish costly gifts upon you, and these Narra shall never intrude upon you. I will make your life a dream of beauty, my peerless Dora!"

The girl's pure face grew bright with anticipation of the pleasures in store for her.

It was very sweet, after the experience of the past few days, to be cared for and watched over and loved.

"The prospect pleases you, Dora?"

"Yes, dear Felix."

Wamer pressed his lips to hers.

"Could we not slip out now," he asked. "Or do you suppose those odious people are on the stairs, or outside the door?"

"They are watching the door, I don't doubt," said Dora. "But to-night will do, Felix. When are we to be married? And where?"

"Married?" repeated Wamer, in seeming wonder.

"Yes. Will it not be too late to-night?"

"We were not talking of being married yet a while, my dear child," said Wamer, blandly. "It will be just the same though—"

Dora sprang to her feet and faced him, her breast panting, her cheeks white, her eyes blazing.

"Do you mean, Felix Wamer," she demanded, "that you have been deliberately insulting me?"

"What a little spitefire! Why, no, Dora, not insulting you! I love you too well for that!"

"Then what do you mean? An honourable marriage?"

In spite of himself, Wamer's cheeks flushed hotly, and a confusion came upon him.

"Look here, Dora," he said. "You cannot expect to carry your pigs to as good a market—to use an old and pertinent, though vulgar simile—as if the animals had not deteriorated. There is a wide difference between Miss Dora Chessom of Chessom Grange, daughter of the old squire, a supposed heiress, of as good blood as any in the country, and Dora Narr, the penniless daughter of a pair of roving vagabonds! Don't you see the difference yourself? And do you suppose a man in my position, with my prospects, could marry a Narr?"

Dora seemed turned to stone, only that her eyes kept up their bright, indignant blaze.

"You did mean to insult me, then?" she whispered.

"Insult you? You forget who you are, Dora! Now, be sensible. I love you—"

Dora waved her hand, cutting short his speech.

"Stop!" she commanded. "Not another word! Your love is an insult. I have found you out, Felix Wamer, and in good time. Leave me!"

"Dora, you cannot mean it! These airs would do well enough for Miss Chessom, but not for Dora Narr! And this is your love for me? You would have me blight my own prospects, offend my cousin Lord Champney, and drag myself down in the world, just that you may be exalted out of the sphere in which Providence placed you? Sweet Dora—"

"Hush!" she said, looking at him with great solemn eyes, brimful of woe. "I do not wish to hear your voice longer, Mr. Wamer. I thought you good, and generous, and true. You have revealed yourself to me as vile, and base, and mean. You have become hateful in my sight. No offer of marriage now could induce me to look upon you with any sentiment other than loathing. Go! and may Heaven pardon you the wrong you would have inflicted upon a worse than orphaned girl!"

Her strange and solemn dignity, the look in her eyes, the hauteur of her slight figure—all had their effect upon Wamer.

He began to see what a gem he had flung from him, in his pride and selfishness. He vaguely felt that it was the girl herself, and not her parentage and the circumstances surrounding her, that was of consequence.

"Dora," he pleaded, arising, and approaching her; "I have made a fool of myself—"

"Go!"

"You cannot forgive me?"

"Never! Go!"

He turned as if to depart, but at that juncture the door opened, and Mr. and Mrs. Narr came in, both smiling.

"Time's up!" said Jack Narr, in a chirping voice. "Now, son-in-law, I am ready to hear your intentions. When is it to be?—the wedding, you know?"

"Never!" said Wamer, with mock politeness, his soul full of anger. "Your daughter has refused me."

"Refused you?" cried Mrs. Narr, in a shrill voice. "Refused the cousin of a lord? What does this mean?"

"It means," said Dora, coldly, "that this man has insulted me; that he did not intend an honourable marriage."

"Insulted Miss Dora?" said Jack Narr, flushing up. "Look here, Mr. Wamer—you'd better be in other business than insulting a lady higher 'n you are, and one whose shoes you ain't worthy to unlace. Miss Dora's a lady—"

"Hush, Jack!" interrupted his wife, pushing him into the background. "Jack always talks, sir, when he's in his cups. If you've got any explanations to make, Mr. Wamer, why don't you make 'em. Did you insult the girl?"

"I told her I wasn't in a condition to marry at present, though I am well able to support her. Miss Dora seems to put on airs. She could not expect to marry a gentleman, now!"

The woman appeared to reflect. A speculative light appeared in her eyes. A scheming look glowed on her face.

"Come out into the hall, Mr. Wamer," she said; "I'd like to talk over the matter with you."

"You can say what you wish to say here!" said Dora. "You seem to be kindred spirits, and I will leave you to yourselves!"

With a look of utter scorn and loathing at the trio, she swept from the room, entering her bedroom, and double locked the door.

"This place is unsafe for me longer!" she thought. "These people are waiting to sell me to a life of horror! I must trust in myself and in Heaven."

She knelt by her bedside a few moments in voiceless prayer. Then, arising, she tied on her hat and drew on her sacque. A moment later she noiselessly opened her room door, slipped down the stairs, and out into the street, while the Narra and Wamer were still in the midst of their secret and villainous concave.

(To be continued.)

A NORTH COUNTRY PAWNBROKER.—An amusing scene recently occurred in one of the committee rooms of the House of Commons. The range of the evidence included information from a pawnbroker from the north country, Yorkshire, it was presumed, by a professor of modern languages, who was present. One of the M.P.'s officiating on the committee belonged to the highest order of fashion in costume, and matched the exterior man by his value internally. He was great. But he and the pawnbroker did not get on, and "my good man," as he was called, got nettled at the M.P. "A stamp!" said the pawnbroker, "der yer think I'd put a penny stamp upon such a document? Now, if ever you come to my concern to pop anything—" "My good man, don't think," said the expanding M.P., "that I could ever do such a thing." "Who can tell," bluntly responded our uncle, "what bad luck's in store for us all?" The titter was rising on all sides, and, swelling out the bosom of his shirt, the M.P. continued, "But, my good man, it is quite impossible; it is quite—" "Not at all, not at all; and I repeat, if ever you wants to pop anything and comes to my concern, I'll treat you like a swell; no penny stamps, but I'll clap a handsome sixpenny Government bit of paper on the transaction in a way that would be proper on an agreement between two gentlemen."

MR. MOTLEY.—There is a story going that the American Minister will be recalled. The withdrawal of Mr. Motley will not cause intense regret in London, because he was violent in his opinions, and very intemperate in his expression of them. As a private person no one would have cared for that, although all would have regretted that so distinguished a literary man should take an unfavorable view of our character and institutions. As a Minister of a great Power, the candour and colour of his sentiments became offensive. Ever since the robbery committed in his house, Mr. Motley has been mighty in invective against the police and the London plebs, and spoke with all the rancour of an Anglophobe of some very discreditable incidents in our social history. The reason of his recall is mainly the great trouble he has been giving his own Government on the question of precedence. Perhaps the ladies of his house, true Americans in their love of equality with the highest, had something to do with it. Any way, as Ambassadors take precedence of Ministers, Turkey, France, Russia, Austria, and Prussia marched before the United States on all State occasions; and Mr. Motley is said to have represented to his Government the desirableness of accrediting an Ambassador to the Court of St. James's, which the United States Government could scarcely do, as there is no crowned head there to send a representative.

LIGHTING MINES BY GAS.—At the Royal Institution of Cornwall meeting, Mr. W. J. Henwood, the president, in the course of his address, said that in Sweden at the beginning of this century, and in Himalaya some fifteen years ago, the miners obtained light (and were sometimes almost suffocated) when at their work by smoky flames from burning splinters of resinous pine. In Brazil, oil, expressed from nuts of the Palma Christi, is commonly used by the miners. An experiment, made at Balleawiden, near Penzance, during several months of 1866-7, attracted at the time much less attention than might have been expected, and is now almost forgotten. Coal gas was made on the surface, and conveyed down one of the shafts to a depth of more than 120 fathoms, through a 2-inch wrought-iron pipe, from which branches, varying from $\frac{1}{2}$ inch to 1 inch in diameter, were laid—in some cases for at least 170 fathoms—along the several (levels) galleries, and similar tubes extended, occasionally as much as 10 fathoms, above the levels, to the various (backs or pitches) parts in progress. Flexible pipes of gutta percha were, on occasions, carried to individual labourers, but, where four men worked together, a single jet of gas gave light for them all. The captains of the mines reported that—"In the shaft, levels, and pitches it

answered so exceedingly well as to leave no doubt of its serving all the purposes for which it is intended. It was computed that the works were lighted by gas one-third cheaper than by candles.

REGIMENTAL CANTEN.—A general order has been issued from the Horse Guards stating that attention has been recently drawn to cases of fraud or gross negligence on the part of the *employees* of regimental canteens, by which discredit to individuals and serious loss to canteen funds have been occasioned, his Royal Highness the Field Marshal Commanding-in-Chief regrets to observe that the primary fault in each instance can invariably be traced either to a departure from canteen rules or to a want of proper supervision on the part of the officer commanding and the officers of the canteen committee. The result of careful inquiry proves that when the duty of supervising the management and the accounts of regimental canteens is strictly performed, the existing rules are sufficient to render it almost impossible for any loss, by fraud or otherwise, to occur without detection at the monthly stock-taking and settlement of accounts. His Royal Highness, therefore, cannot too strongly impress upon general and other officers commanding, and officers in command of regiments or corps, the necessity for exerting the greatest vigilance in all matters connected with these institutions, and thus assist in preventing, if possible, the recurrence of similar irregularities, or of reducing the chances of wrong-doing to the narrowest limits.

THE VEILED LADY.

BY THE

Author of "Fairleigh," "The Rival Sisters," &c., &c.

CHAPTER LIV.

At that awful moment, when the spirit of the fiery-hearted youth seemed suspended between heaven and earth, when the very air in that room was laden with terrible oppression, which sank like lead upon those hearts, quivering, fluttering between the faintest hope and darkest doubt; when, in her agony of the soul, the exhausted mother fell upon her face, and for a few moments was lost to the bitter realisation; when that aged father, with the tears running from the grief rills of his trembling heart, lifted his face with the pallor and rigidity of debilitating sorrow stamped upon it; when that young and lovely maiden raised her dim orbs to heaven, and offered herself as a sacrifice; when that hardy son of the sea, who had breasted and fought the angry foaming tide for years, felt all power go from him and wept like a child before his Maker; when that loving sister lay quaking in anguish and terror; when the man of science, endowed with rare gifts, was heavy with fear, and knew that mortal power was at an end, and that Heaven alone could save; then, when none hardly dared to breathe, when their very life seemed depending upon that issue, there slowly arose, from the extreme end of the room, an angelic form of matchless symmetry, whose apparel, sombre as midnight, hung gracefully from her majestic figure; whose features, of the purity of falling snow, were raised towards Heaven; whose white and delicate hands were clasped as if in benediction; whose presence inspired a new awe, which charmed and petrified those who gazed upon her; whose influence was tranquillising almost unto subtlety; and whose grand, imposing, yet awful beauty thrilled to the soul those agonised beings, who, with bewilderment added to their anguish and fear, knew nought of torture if this were life.

A moment, one moment only, the Veiled Lady stood in the chamber, where bright, glistening life and dark, shadowy death fought for the supremacy.

She disappeared. Each turned their eyes upon the other, and then, with tremulous motion, gazed upon the slender form of the beauteous child.

All held their breath. Every fibre of their beings was rigid; every nerve was strained to its utmost tension; every heart beat with faint, subdued pulsation; and every spirit quailed under that suspense which, silent as the grave and thrilling as the voice of Heaven, held all in awe.

Slowly, and as if parted by the touch of angel fingers, the youth's glorious eyes opened, those rills of scarlet hue quivered and broke into a smile of celestial radiance, which diffused itself o'er the lovely face like the sun's rays streaming in effulgence o'er Paradise, and like the low, melodious rippling tones of an *Æolian* harp, came the words: "I've seen my mother!"

That soft, sweet voice a moment held all entranced; then over their spirits came a mild, delicious feeling of infinite trust, which commanded silence as its happiest auxiliary, and none stirred or made a motion, but heart communed with heart, and all expanded with love and reverence.

With her fair face wearing an expression of purest love and divine gratitude, with her delicate

white hands clasped before her, Inez slowly approached the bed. A moment she gazed upon that face again imbued with life, and then, while tears of thankfulness coursed down her cheeks, she sank upon her knees, and devoutly murmured:

"Oh, Father, thou hast answered my prayer; he lives—he breathes. Oh, Heaven, we thank thee!"

"Inez!" he whispered, and turned his luminous orbs upon her.

The words thus spoken broke the spell which had held all in abeyance, and Don Santo, now trembling with joy, laid his head upon the pillow, and while his grey locks mingled with the jetty curls of the youth, he lowly said:

"My son lives—my boy. Oh, my boy!"

"I shall live; but I have been very near to Heaven," was the answer in faint accents.

"Oh, doctor, is it true—will he live?" queried Mrs. Linwood in a tremulous whisper.

Senor Reno scrutinised his face closely, and then, while a glad smile played o'er his features, he confidently replied:

"Yes, it is passed—he is saved!"

Mrs. Linwood bowed her head, and from her heart went forth a prayer of gratitude to Him who had restored the beloved youth. Then she bent over, and pressed a warm kiss upon the pale brow; she could not speak.

"Dear Mrs. Linwood, I have come back to you."

"Oh, my dear, dear Frank," sobbed Mrs. Linwood, her happiness choking her voice; "I am so glad. Oh, my child, my—"

and her voice gave way.

"Dearest," murmured Captain Linwood, his strong frame quivering with emotion, "we do not realise our blessing; I never knew until a few moments ago how much I loved him!"

Ere his wife could reply, Donna Eulalie drew near the couch, resting upon her husband's arm.

She leaned forward, placed one hand upon the coverlet, and gazed wistfully, tenderly into his face; then raising her eyes she ejaculated:

"Heaven hast given him back to me—to his mother! Oh, I cannot speak. My heart is full. Oh, my sweet boy! and resting her head upon her husband's shoulder, she wept in joy.

The youth gazed alternately from one to the other, and as he saw their happiness, and knew that his return to life had given it birth, he sighed softly and closed his eyes that the touching picture might not excite him.

Hand in hand Sylvia and Inez approached the bed. The former gently clasped one of his hands, and while her whole being was permeated with happiness, she lowly said:

"Oh, my only brother—my darling brother! Not gone? Oh, no, no, no! bless Heaven, no! Oh, oh, Enrique! my heart is whole again!"

And she buried her face in the pillow.

He opened his eyes, and in tones almost inaudible returned:

"Dear Inez—dear Sylvia!"

Sylvia raised her head, her face illumined with a tranquil smile, her eyes beamed, and for a moment she gazed upon him and then looked towards Inez.

The latter was standing with her hands clasped over her heart, while her breast rose and fell beneath the bliss which his words had produced, and one great tear-drop rolled slowly down her cheek.

Sylvia turned, was clasped in her friend's arms, and for a moment neither spoke; then in a choked voice of thankfulness Sylvia said:

"Come, Inez, let us look upon the sky, and the earth, and the flowers; for, oh, I know they are more beautiful and bright. Come!"

Inez clasped her hand, looked once more at the youth, and then accompanied her friend to the lawn.

As they stepped out upon the greensward, Sylvia waved her hand towards the luxuriant verdure, and softly said:

"Oh, Inez, it is brighter. It seems to me that the sun never sparkled so before, that the flowers never looked so lovely: and it is because Enrique lives."

"Yes, oh, yes," murmured Inez, while a halo of sweet tranquillity hovered o'er her face.

And again she drew Sylvia to her heart, and again their tears of joy mingled together in the place where they had wept in grief, their hearts beat against each other with new love and new happiness, while the birds sang their sweet songs, the mild south breeze wafted the fragrance of the blooming exotics to their nostrils, laden with the breath of life, and grim death stalked away—oh, joy, away!—and radiance, hope, beatitude, life were about, above, below them and in their hearts.

"Oh, Inez," whispered Sylvia, as her tears ceased flowing, "can we, do we realise the magnitude of our blessing?"

"I know I was impatient, but no mortal could have helped being so. I will try and have more faith when sorrow again comes."

Sylvia gazed affectionately upon her, and said:

"And more, Inez—more joy for you. You heard Enrique call you dear—"

"Yes, oh, yes," she interrupted, "and it made my heart glad. Oh, Sylvia, he will love me; I know he will; for my heart, body, and soul are bound up in him, and I cannot live without him."

"I don't doubt but that he will," rejoined Sylvia, kindly; "I don't see how he can help it, for you are one to inspire love."

"Do you really think so, Sylvia?" queried Inez, the rich blood mantling her cheeks.

"Would I tell you aught I did not believe? No, Inez, you know I would not; and when I tell you that even now his former love for you is revived, I express no more than did his words."

"But they may have been inspired only by motives of gratitude. A stranger even would be likely to use those words under such circumstances—yes, very likely; and it makes me sad now that I think of it."

"Oh, Inez," said Sylvia, in a tone of gentle reproof, "are you nourishing doubts already? A few moments ago and we knew not whether Enrique would live or die."

"Say no more, dear Sylvia. I was wrong in speaking so; but it is my very love that causes my anxiety, and you know how much I love him."

"I do, Inez," answered Sylvia, pressing a kiss upon her cheek, "and I know also your great gratitude for his rescue from death. I did not intend to hurt your feelings, dear."

"Oh, I know you did not, but I could not keep the tears back. Now, Sylvia, I have a favour to ask."

"Anything that I can do I will."

"Perhaps it is asking too much; and Inez entwined her arms about her friend's neck and gazed pleadingly into her face; "but it will be a great pleasure to me."

"But I know not what it is," laughed Sylvia, wishing to entirely annul the effect of her rebuke, "and I can say nothing until you tell me."

"Well, it is this," replied Inez, her face again reddening. "I want to take your place now and nurse Enrique. Will you let me?"

"Yes, if Senora Linwood is willing, and I think she will be."

"Oh, thank you, dear Sylvia!" exclaimed Inez, joyfully. "To be near him, and the sweet knowledge that I am helping him to health will make me doubly happy."

Sylvia smiled her reply, and they entered the sitting-room, where Senor Reno, Mrs. Linwood, and Donna Eulalie were.

"Then you think the youth will soon recover?" said Mrs. Linwood addressing the doctor, in continuance of previous conversation.

"Yes, Senora," returned Senor Reno, with professional assurance; "we can now hope for speedy convalescence, the shock has left him much stronger than I anticipated, which, of course is much in his favour. All that we have now to avoid is excitement of any kind; and especially do I caution one and all against any recurrence to the topic of his lineage, even after he is strong enough to be about, for it might cause a relapse at that late hour. As it is, the preservation of his life is almost a miracle, and if he should have a relapse his death would be certain."

"Thankful enough are we that he has been spared to us," said Donna Eulalie, with deep feeling, "not to need counsel in regard to the preservation of his life."

Senor Reno bit his lip, smiled slightly at Mrs. Linwood, and then turning towards Donna Eulalie, respectfully responded:

"I fully understand your feelings, my dear Donna, but in your joy you might possibly refer to scenes past from a desire to make him happier, but which would have a contrary effect; this it is that I prohibit, as it is my duty to do."

"I comprehend your meaning," rejoined the Donna, "and your commands shall be obeyed."

He bowed his thanks, and was about to depart, when Sylvia remarked:

"I have a request to make Senora Linwood, to which I suppose Senor Reno's acquiescence is necessary."

"What is it, dear?" asked Mrs. Linwood with a kind smile.

"I wish to resign my position as assistant nurse, and confer it upon another."

"You need not tell me who that other is," observed Senor Reno, with a significant glance towards Inez.

The latter blushed to her very hair, and turned her head away.

"Then, since you are so very penetrative," responded Sylvia, with a roguish toss of her pretty head, "perhaps you will consent?"

"With pleasure," smiled Senor Reno, while his eyes twinkled merrily; "I have known patients to recover in one fourth of the usual time, when attended by a young and fair nurse, who, report said, might be a cousin, but certainly not a sister."

"You are too bad Senor Reno," said Sylvia, deprecatingly, "you confuse Inez."

"Why, my dear Senorita Sylvia, you astonish me," exclaimed the doctor, with well assumed ignorance. "This is the first mention you have made of the applicant's name, and I surely am not culpable when entirely innocent of the person's presence."

Sylvia shook her finger playfully, and then addressing Mrs. Linwood, said:

"You are willing, I am sure?"

"Certainly," rejoined Mrs. Linwood; "it will give you a rest, and me an opportunity to cultivate the acquaintance of Senorita Inez."

"Which will give me great pleasure, Senora," said the latter; "for although we have been much together, our grief has kept us apart. I trust that I shall, ere long, hold an equal place with Sylvia in your friendship."

Mrs. Linwood smiled in her sweet, calm way, and answered:

"I am confident that we shall like each other very much; and now shall we not go up and see the youth?"

Inez bowed assent, and together they ascended the stairs. As they entered the chamber, Mrs. Linwood remarked:

"I have brought you a new nurse, Frank."

A faint smile illumined his features, and as the maiden approached, he whispered:

"You are very kind, Inez."

The latter said nothing, but the light of love shone from her features, and as she thought how near to death he had been, tears welled up from the fountains of her heart, and trembled upon the long lashes of her eyes.

Mrs. Linwood watched her as she went about her simple duties with such cheerfulness and grace; watched her as she arranged his pillows with the utmost regard for the smallest trifle which could increase his comfort; watched her as she held the medicine to his lips, and noted the gentleness and care which pervaded every look and action, and thought:

"She loves him ardently, and with the strength of a woman. Will he return it? Dear Frank, he has passed through so much, and shall he be fated to innocently break her heart, because he cannot reciprocate her affection? or shall he, as is most probable, return her love, and thus usurp the place of another? for well I know that he is not the son of Don Santo. Ah me, time can only tell."

CHAPTER LV.

THREE weeks had passed, during which time the youth had gained strength very rapidly, and likewise improved in appearance. A faint colour was already perceptible in his cheeks, which had also acquired some of their former rotundity, and his eyes now beamed with that steady brilliancy which had characterised them in health. Indeed, Senor Reno remarked upon his rapid convalescence as something wonderful and unprecedented in his practice, and playfully ascribed it to the soothing and revivifying presence of his beautiful nurse.

Mrs. Linwood yet lingered. She could not leave him whom she had first seen upon the ruthless waves in an open boat, and who since then had gradually crept into her heart, until she felt for him the love of a mother. And now that a new, and what promised to be one of the most harassing experiences of his life, was coming upon him, she felt that he needed her presence and advice as long as he could possibly have them, which, she regretted, would not be long, as her husband was called upon to return, and the first exercise of her love and duty was due to him.

Mrs. Linwood had very much desired a conversation with the youth, but of late she had feared that he was not strong enough to bear it. On this morning, however, he was looking better than at any time since his illness, and she determined to improve the opportunity. Circumstances favoured her. Inez had gone out for a ride, but had been induced to do so only by the express command of Senor Reno, who saw that she was applying herself too closely to her duties, and neglecting her own health, in endeavouring to promote the recovery of the youth.

In a large arm-chair, surrounded by pillows, and his feet resting upon an ottoman, sat the youth, gazing meditatively out upon the blooming earth, and now and then sighing as he thought of his confinement, and exclusion from participating in outdoor sports.

Presently, Mrs. Linwood entered. Advancing, bending over the chair, and tenderly stroking his brow, she kindly said:

"You are looking something like your former self. Are you stronger?"

He took one of her soft hands within his, and glancing affectionately upon her, replied:

"Yes; I am much better this morning, thank you. But I should not have recovered so speedily had you not been here."

"Do you think so? You know that the doctor at-

tributes it to the presence of Inez," returned Mrs. Linwood, with the hope of ascertaining if thus far any impression had been made upon his heart.

He cast down his eyes, and earnestly said:

"Mrs. Linwood, I can speak to you as I can to no other. You are the only woman I have ever loved; you have seemed the nearest to a mother. You know, as I do, that these good people are labouring under a delusion, the agitation consequent upon which has almost cost me my life. I have tried to drive the idea from their minds, but my only answers have been accusations of insanity, followed by piteous words and glances which have stung me to the quick. My honour forbade me by word or act to coincide with their views even to save myself trouble, thinking, as I did, that when the mask should fall they would feel that I had deceived them. That I could not bear the thoughts of, and schooled myself to endure the odium of being considered a lunatic rather than enact a false part for one moment. The family are stronger in their belief that I am their son if I attempt to deny it; I only renew my former misery. I feel that I have done my duty. My conscience is clear; and now if they are determined to make me their son after my repeated warnings, why, I shall not resist."

"My dear boy," said Mrs. Linwood, while an expression of deep sympathy dwelt upon his fair face, "you have been placed in a most harrowing position. I do not wonder that your brain gave way under such a pressure. You have suffered; still you have the knowledge that your honour is unstained, that you have done your duty. But tell me, dear Frank, in regard to Inez—"

"I will candidly admit, said Mrs. Linwood, that I esteem Inez very much. Undoubtedly if I am with her, I shall love her, and it pains me when I think of it, because I know that I am taking the affection which belongs to another; and know also, should I become attached to her, that when that other makes his appearance I shall be caused new grief, and for that reason I will endeavour to steel heart against it."

That will be the best course for you to pursue, though you are very susceptible to tenderness, and you will find it, I imagine, a difficult task to be continually with one so lovable as Inez, and not be drawn towards her."

"I am well aware of that," mused the youth; "and I shall exert my will to avoid such a result. If I should love her she shall not know it—but there, another obstacle meets me, she could not help knowing it."

"Why?"

"Enrique De Vega and Inez were children together," responded the youth, "and their childish regard grew as they grew. It had been considered no secret, this projected alliance between the houses of De Vega and Carro, and Inez, in her artless, innocent way spoke of it as freely as did Enrique. And now, although years have passed, Inez is as truthful, unaffected, and confiding as she was then, and would not hesitate to speak to me of her love; consequently the instant I repulse her, I again subject myself to the troubles which I have before experienced. Tell me, dear friend, what shall I do?"

"I must reflect on the subject further before I can answer your question. The qualities you have named are those which increase her beauty and worth in your esteem?"

"Yes, alas! yes. I am sorry for it, but I cannot help it. Her kindness, gentleness, and devotion would arouse regard in a harder heart than mine—there it is, Mrs. Linwood, my heart is too susceptible—"

"No, not so," she gently interrupted. "No heart can be too susceptible to loving feeling. Would to Heaven there were more as tender as yours, then our goals, insane asylums, and our 'homes' would war for inhabitants, and minds would be taught instead of bodies beaten, and the light of truth would be given to every mortal, instead of the darkness of solitary confinement; but I will not moralise, for I have yet much to say, and too much conversation will weary you. You know, Frank, that you are yet young, and young hearts are easily impressed. You have had very little of the society of young women, and you would naturally imagine that the first one, being a sweet, attractive creature, like Inez, would hold your affections, but such is not usually the case. Even if you should think that you love her, you might find by the time the real Enrique appears, that your love was only a pleasant hallucination. I do not accuse you of vacillation, I merely refer to the changes which take place in youth, when the imagination is intensified, and external objects receive the brilliancy of colouring which paints so bewitchingly the fancies of the mind. It is so with the majority of young people, even those whose intellect is powerful; it is natural, and to take it away would be to destroy half the charm of youth."

He smiled slightly and answered:

"Your words are true. I have often had the same

or similar thoughts; but you will remember that my childhood was an exceptional one, that I was thrust into manhood's school of adversity, if I may so express it, and kept there until little by little the dreams, ideas, sports of childhood were driven from my mind, and in their place was found a premature age of thought, desire and action, until to-day, I, in years a boy, am in grief, experience, adventure—a man. If ever I should have a calm life, then the crushed and careless happiness of childhood, may by joy's influence, be reborn and show itself, or a faint reflection of itself. What I love to-day, Mrs. Linwood, I shall love for ever."

Mrs. Linwood gazed upon him in fervent, undisguised admiration. There was none of childhood's fickleness or frivolity; there was the man—the poet!

"You are right, Frank," she said, at length; "I had almost forgotten your strange life and bitter experiences—which, however, have done you good—when I spoke. But have you decided upon your course?"

"No, I have not, but circumstances have. Here is my position exactly. First, I cannot argue against their ideas; I must submit to them. Secondly, if I tacitly regard the Don as my father, I must look upon Inez as my betrothed. If I am cold to Inez, the 'lunacy' torment commences again. Thirdly, if I really love Inez, but evince towards her only friendship, the Don will investigate, and grief will begin again at my perversity. If I love Inez and tell her so, then comes great joy to the family and future consequences to me. One or more of these three conditions I must adopt and act under. I think I shall try and temporise between the first and second propositions of the third condition: Thus by clever and honest management I can keep them all quiet and content, I hope."

"And I, too, most earnestly. You are in a perplexing position, but remember how you are blessed in the restoration of your life. You have been guided safely through many vicissitudes."

"Dear Mrs. Linwood," he gratefully exclaimed, "your words are ever wise, kind, and true. I shall remember them. But, hark—I hear horses' hoofs!"

Mrs. Linwood arose, glanced out of the window, and said:

"Yes, it is Inez, and our conference must soon cease. Let me ask you, while I have the opportunity, not to reflect any more than you can possibly help upon the untoward circumstances which surround you, for it will be detrimental to your health and will not assist you to unravel the mystery in the least."

"I will not; indeed, if nothing else would prevent me, the fear of a relapse of my illness most certainly would."

"There is one more question which I had nearly forgotten to ask you," continued Mrs. Linwood, meditatively. "You remember when you first awoke from that death-like stupor that you said, 'I have seen my mother.'"

His face became illumined with a light of peace, and while his dark orbs glowed with mildness, love, and reverence, he murmured, almost absently:

"Oh, Mrs. Linwood, it was beautiful! Shall I tell you?"

"Yes, yes, dear Frank," answered Mrs. Linwood, eagerly, his beaming face and low tones having aroused her interest to fever height, though she knew not why. "Tell me quickly! I am very impatient."

His features grew more radiant, and resting his head upon the pillow, he directed his eyes upon her and began in a sweet, rippling, yet deep voice:

"Yes, I had a dream; but so life-like that to call it a dream seems almost sacrilegious. I thought I stood in a tropical glade, where the rich, luxuriant flowers bloomed in lavish exuberance upon every side, and the very air trembled beneath its burden of rare and intoxicating perfume, while in ethereal chorus sounded the clear, thrilling notes of birds of dazzling plumage that hovered near and around me. As I gazed I marvelled, and presently a faintness, most delicious, gradually diffused itself o'er me, until I became devoid of strength, but still retained consciousness. Like the reed which by the wind is slowly bent to the ground, I felt my body incline towards the earth, and in a moment I had fallen and lay prostrate, while my senses slowly deserted me, and a motion like that of the eagle in his downward swoop seemed given to my body, and I knew no more. I was awakened by the falling of drops upon my forehead. I opened my eyes and beheld a paradise, whose beauties, matchless and diversified, enchained my mind in delight, and filled my heart with awe and reverence."

"The place upon which I had fallen had arisen and assumed the shape of a delicately and beautifully modelled boat, perfect in every part, and formed of spear-grass and blushing flowers entwined, while the exotics on either side had lengthened in stem,

and now rose even with the gunwale of my emerald barque, and from their silken hearts came tiny streams of sparkling water, which seemed to diffuse radiance in its course. I lay enraptured, a tranquillity enveloping my soul which brought tears of bliss to my eyes. A moment more and water arose around me, not blue or green, but of a blinding white, and whose ripples scintillated like wavelets of diamonds, while the amber, crimson, purple, and vermilion-tinted flowers floated upon its surface until it appeared like one glorious, glittering diadem, garnished with sapphires, amethysts, and rubies.

"The boat began to glide o'er the silvery flood; the water's ripple echoed strains of soft and exquisite music; the buds gave birth to songsters, that nestled among their petals, and added their heavenly carols to the dulcet, melting chorus, until the harmony was sublime, angelic—until my mind, heart, being, and soul were charmed, entranced, bewildered; and still the barque danced on o'er the snowy tide, when suddenly an opaque mist arose around me, and enclosed me in a circle. The haze, which had now become opalescent, parted in front; an effluence of golden light broke forth, and revealed three beings of holy presence, whose gauzy drapery floated away from their seraphic forms like fleecy summer cloudlets.

"The mild light that streamed from their faces, so pale and fair, added to my happiness, until my respiration became fainter, and my heart pulsed more slowly. At that instant, the cloud on my right was rent in twain, and I beheld Inez, with her pallid face raised to heaven, piteously beseeching for my life, while nearer her were Don Santo and Sylvia; but my barque glided on, nearer, nearer to those spirit beings who held forth their hands to receive me. Again, and on the left, the filmy veil parted, and I saw you, your husband, and Donna Eulalie, mute and trembling with grief, though it saddened me not, for a strange quietude existed in my being, and now bliss filled my heart.

"The three celestial beings turned their transparent orbs to the right and left—each looked at the sorrowing groups—at me—at each other, and then clasped their hands, and leaned forward with divine grace of motion. My boat bounded o'er the glistening surf—I was almost in their arms, when from the wavelets a soft white hand came forth, and was laid on the gunwale of my barque. It paused, and from the silvery waters arose an altar of crystal—a lovely being appeared, attired in white, and sank upon it. Anon one of her hands was placed upon my brow, the other upon her heart, while o'er her shoulders fell her midnight hair, and from her eyes streamed scalding tears; her snowy face was raised in supplication to Heaven, and from the inmost recesses of her heart came the words:

"Oh, Creator, thou hast heard the prayer of the youthful and the aged. Thou hast heard the sister lament, and the mariner's appeal. Thou hast heard all these, yet thy will is not bent. But now before thy throne she who bore him implores thee to stay thy hand! Oh, Heaven! canst thou refuse?"

"The voices of the innumerable songsters again burst forth in rapturous melody; the waters again emitted clear and dulcet notes of ravishing music, and tears dropped from the angels' eyes, while in low, mellow cadence, but which increased in power, until my very being thrilled with ecstasy, came the words:

"Thy son shall live, and thrice shall he bless thee for thy sorrows, and fill thy heart with peace and bliss!"

"There, Mrs. Linwood, that is all," and the tears fell from the youth's eyes. "I awoke at that instant, saw you near me, and uttered those words which you referred to."

"Oh, my dear, dear boy!" sobbed Mrs. Linwood, deeply affected, "you must have been very near heaven, very near—but oh, what does this portend?—tell me, how does it impress you?"

"At times it makes me sad, and then fills my being with a holy tranquillity which draws tears from my eyes; I cannot help it. I know it is unmanly, but my will is powerless when the thought of that vision recurs to me."

"It is not unmanly, my dear boy," said Mrs. Linwood, pressing a kiss upon his brow; "it shows your goodness of heart."

He smiled in appreciation of the caress, and lowly said:

"So vivid, so brilliant was the dream, that at times I can hardly doubt its reality, but it was like every other incident of my life, a delusion of evanescent happiness."

"It partook of real life," replied Mrs. Linwood, as she resumed her seat, "for the ruling thought and hope of your life, your mother, was its most prominent character. It is easy to trace its origin and development, although for the moment my heart was touched so deeply by your poetic description that my mind was unable to recover from it. You were in a semi-unconscious state, almost as Senor Reno said, 'the death-sleep.'

Your life passed in review before your mind; that not being strong enough to uphold the exciting reflection, gave way, providentially, to your imagination—your genius, Frank, which supplied the poetic words and characters, out of which, as I have said, only one real idea was evolved—the thought of your mother. This vision, I am confident, will be a source of great joy to you."

"How? Tell me how."

"I ought to have added, that it is conditional," returned Mrs. Linwood, gazing earnestly into his face, "and depends upon your assent to a request I am about to make."

"Let me hear it, please. I shall have need enough of diversion."

She regarded him very seriously, and impressively responded:

"By using the power Heaven has given you; by describing your dream in verse."

"Mrs. Linwood, you have been very persistent upon that point. If I thought I had sufficient natural gifts to render me even a mediocre poet, I would labour assiduously to that end, but I fear that I have not; and if there is anything I detest, it is poor rhyme."

"You are unjust to yourself, Frank. You know I would not advise you to do anything that I had not reflected calmly upon. I am assured, and my husband has often made the same remark, that you are destined for a poet. Indeed, those words which were suggested to your mind by your vision are almost prophetic; the only drawback is your lack of confidence in yourself. Now promise me that you will devote all your solitude to it, and I am certain that you will some time thank me for thus urging you."

"Casting aside my own doubts, and only for the affection I bear you, I will."

"Oh, thank you; for you will know the interest I take in you, and how ardently I look forward to the time when you shall have reached the position which by nature you are entitled to fill—that of fame and honour."

He smiled somewhat incredulously, and was about to reply, when the door opened and Inez entered, her face flushed and her eyes sparkling with excitement. Hastily advancing, she breathlessly exclaimed:

"Oh, I have been riding and talking so fast that I am all out of breath."

"Why did you hurry so?" asked Frank. She gazed tenderly into his face, and archly queried:

"Do you not know? Need I tell you?"

He averted his eyes, and though her words had pleased him, reservedly rejoined:

"Really, I have not the least idea. How should I know?"

A melancholy expression flitted over her features, and choking down the sigh that arose as she noticed his indifference, she answered:

"Never mind, then. I came back because I wanted to, although papa desired me to stop at home."

"I am very glad you did not," his heart said, before reflection could check it.

Her face instantly lighted, and she lowly replied:

"Now you make me happy, Enrique. You well know that the cause of my haste was my anxiety and care for you."

He did not answer at once, but gazed into those eyes bent so kindly upon him, and into that fair young face glowing with love, and felt his heart beat faster, and knew that she who had watched by his bedside through hours of pain, who had cooled his heated brow in the silent midnight, and whose soothing presence had allayed his fever, was becoming very dear to him; and as the thought rushed full upon his mind, suggesting many sad contingencies, he cast down his eyes and drew a long respiration.

"Why do you sigh, Enrique?" and her hand was upon his shoulder, and her fragrant breath wafted across his cheek.

"Oh, did I?" he said, somewhat embarrassed.

"Well, nothing. I know of no reason."

"There, you must talk no more now," she admonished, a little surprised, and frightened by the peculiar perturbation he exhibited.

Mrs. Linwood smiled, half amused, half saddened, as she saw the attempts of the youth to resist the fascination which accompanied every glance and action of the lovely Inez. And yet it was not singular, with gratitude for the incitement, that he should love that artless, beautiful creature, whose every thought was purity itself, whose every emotion was unselfish and noble, and whose every act was for his benefit. Indeed, older men than he, and those who had seen women of every clime, could they have looked upon her, would have been impressed with her innocence and goodness, and charmed by her beauty.

Presently Sylvia entered, and after speaking a few words to the youth, turned towards Mrs. Linwood and remarked:

"Senora—but excuse me, I shall use English altogether soon, I hope—I was about to say that Mr. Linwood wishes your presence."

Mrs. Linwood bowed her thanks, arose and went below.

Sylvia drew Inez to a window, and under pretence of looking out upon the garden, whispered:

"Is Enrique right in his mind? Is he better?"

"Yes, I think so," returned Inez, not wishing to excite the sister's alarm by imparting to her the slight mistrust which had disturbed her own mind a few moments previously; "he is quite strong now; but oh, Sylvia, how happy I shall be when he can go out again and accompany me in my rides."

"That will indeed be a joyful day, dear Inez. But tell me, is he indifferent towards you?"

"Thank Heaven, I can answer no," responded Inez, gladly. "I think he begins to recollect his childhood now."

"But never speak to him of it," continued Sylvia; "it might cause a relapse, and oh, Inez, that would kill us both."

Her face paled even at the thought, and she rejoined:

"I would suffer hours of pain ere I would utter one word that could hurt him in any way. But we must talk no more, Sylvia, he may think we are conversing upon his former insanity, and that would injure him more than a direct reference to it, for you know whispering always acts as an irritant upon the nerves of a sick person. Come."

And the two girls moved forward and seated themselves near the youth, and gazed upon him in fond silence.

In a short time Mrs. Linwood re-entered. Her face wore an expression of melancholy, though she was striving to disguise it.

As the youth saw her, he seemed involuntarily to understand that her spirits were depressed, and quickly said:

"Oh, Mrs. Linwood, you are sad, and why?"

By an effort she brought a smile to her face, and answered in a voice of forced calmness:

"You must promise me, first, that you will be very quiet; and second, that you will not be sad."

He regarded her a moment in mingled apprehension and wonder, and then replied:

"Tell me anything except that you are about to leave me, and I can bear it with composure."

The look of sadness upon her features grew deeper, notwithstanding her effort to dissipate it, and she questioned:

"But you would endure even that meekly, did you know it would cause me unhappiness if you did not?"

A faint smile lingered about his lips, and he earnestly returned:

"I would do anything for you."

As Inez heard those words she thought:

"Oh, if he had only said that to me."

"Then, my dear boy," and Mrs. Linwood clasped one of his hands lovingly within her own, "you will control your regret, when I tell you that within two hours I shall leave you."

His expression changed to one of grief, and in a low, pained tone he responded:

"And you are really going to leave me—you, who have been with me during so many of my trials; and I know not when I shall again see you."

She dashed the gathering tears from her eyes, and with an assumption of cheerfulness said:

"You know that I would not leave you if you were in danger, but you are now on the road to health, and thoughts of that, mingled with the hope that we shall soon meet again, must mitigate the pain of our parting."

A shadowy smile passed over his features, and he asked:

"Why is your departure so sudden?"

"My husband received a letter a few hours since, which requests his presence in London as soon as he can possibly get there. And that reminds me, you will write to me, Frank; tell me your feelings, and confide in me as if you were my own dear son, will you not?" and a light—soft, tender, and bright—shone from her clear brown eyes.

The youth was silent a moment. There was a choking sensation in his throat, from the force of the emotions in his heart, that prevented immediate utterance. At length he raised his dark eyes to her face, and rejoined:

"Yes; and it will be the pleasure of each week, and I fear the only one. Your letters! I shall look forward to them with a yearning I cannot tell you of; and your words, so kind! Oh, Mrs. Linwood! I shall never forget them."

She looked upon him in mingled love and grief; then advancing, drew his hand upon her breast, and pressing a warm kiss upon his lips, huskily said:

"I am going now. Be patient and resigned, dear Frank—adieu, adieu."

He held her hands, gazed into her face with those brilliant orbs, now dim with tears, and tremulously answered:

"Farewell, dear, dear Mrs. Linwood, farewell."

She hesitated, glanced again upon him, bent over



[RETURNING HEALTH.]

him, again kissed him, and then with a deep sigh hurried towards the door, followed by Sylvia and Inez.

The youth was alone. He closed his eyes and lay back upon the pillow, as if to shut from his view the chair whereon Mrs. Linwood had sat. She was gone, and what little happiness he had had, had gone with her.

Presently Captain Linwood entered, and approaching the youth, clasped his hand, and while his deep, manly voice quivered, impressively said: "My dear boy, we part once more. You have experienced many of the storms of life, and will perhaps have to endure more; but a calm must come, hope for it, and be as happy as you can. Remember the Falcon—remember William Linwood, and may the God of tempest and sunshine be with and protect you. Adieu."

The youth wrung his hand, murmured a few words almost inaudible, and the gallant sailor left the room.

"All gone," mused the youth, and his eyes drooped, and his heart became heavier.

"Enrique—dear Enrique—you do not mean all."

And Inez—who had entered very softly a moment before—placed her little hand upon his arm, and raised her sweet face to his.

Like the bright sunshine, those eyes shone through the clouds that enveloped his spirit, and impulsively he threw his arm around her neck, and lowly said:

"Dear Inez, I am thankful you have come."

Her face became radiant, her heart beat with joy, and she murmured:

"Oh, Enrique, you do care a little for me?"

The instant those words had left his lips he regretted their utterance, but he had, at that moment, felt so utterly alone, that her smiling face arising so quickly before him, had driven everything from his mind but the love which he could not help feeling for her. But now, as reason and thought of the consequences which an admission of his love might produce returned to his mind, he reproached himself for the impulse.

"Enrique, you do not speak," continued Inez, her joy damped by his silence. "Are you ill?"

"Yes—no!" he confusedly stammered. "The fact is, I am tired."

For a moment she gazed upon him doubtfully. Was that instant but a lucid interval, and had his monomania returned? This was the question that agitated her mind, while her happiness took wings, and once more she was condemned to suspense.

Apprehensive lest he should divine her unpleasant

thoughts by her face, she assumed a calm smile, and seated herself near the window.

He, however, was too much engaged with his own reflections to notice anything else, and the minutes flew on in silence.

At length the youth raised his eyes, sighed wearily, and remarked:

"Inez, please summon the Don to assist me to retire."

She cast upon him a look of tender solicitude, and then, descending to the sitting-room, sought the Don, and made the desired request.

"He is not worse?" queried Inez, anxiously.

"No, I think not," replied Inez, attempting to crush her own fears; "only weary."

Quickly the Don ascended the stairs, and entering the room, affectionately said:

"My dear, dear boy, how do you feel? No bad symptoms? Are you sure?"

"Oh, yes, quite sure," returned the youth with a slight smile. "I have been up longer to-day than usual, and am a little tired in consequence."

The Don drew near, and stroked his hair tenderly, then moved away a few steps, and regarded him closely as if desirous of noting the slightest change in his looks, that the doctor might be sent for immediately upon the first unfavourable indication.

Satisfied that the youth was as well as could reasonably be expected, the Don approached, wheeled his chair near to the couch, and after removing his wrapper and under clothing, assisted him into bed.

With all a woman's care and precision, the good old Don pressed his lips to the youth's brow, and kindly said:

"Can I do anything more, my boy?"

The gentle consideration, the tenderness, and the pure fatherly love which the old man evinced touched the youth's heart, and he almost wished that he was his father. At all events, he ought to be thankful for having his lot cast among those who were so kind to him, even if they were labouring under a delusion, and with a brilliant, grateful smile, brought to his face by these reflections, he responded:

"Thank you, dear Don: I believe there is nothing—yes—you may send Inez up, if you please."

The Don smiled, and left the room. As he closed the door, he soliloquised:

"The dear boy, he calls me dear already; he's getting over his insanity; he'll be perfectly well soon, and then he'll call me father—oh, that will be a happy day. And he loves Inez—I know it! She's an angel; she has helped him more than the

rest of us put together. Ah, by and bye, it will be bright again, Enrique will marry Inez, and I—well, who knows but that I may have some little grandchildren tugging at my knees, bless them—who knows?" and the Don walked on towards the sitting-room, to tell his wife what Enrique said, and mingled his happy hopes with hers.

Although the youth was well aware that it was dangerous to his future happiness to be thus continually in the society of her who had aroused love in his heart, yet she was the only one, now that Mrs. Linwood was absent, whose presence was congenial to him for any length of time, and he could not deny himself the gratification it afforded.

In a moment Inez again entered, and approaching the couch, laid her hand upon his brow.

How soft that touch, how soothing the velvety stroke of those delicate fingers! He sighed gently, and gazed, as one entranced, into her lovely face, while he felt his heart expand with affection.

Presently she drew a chair near the couch, and read aloud to him extracts from his favourite author. In listening to the inspiring words, rendered more charming by the rich intonation of the fair reader's voice, the afternoon passed rapidly away, and evening came ere he was hardly aware that the sun had set.

Inez arose, went below, returned with the youth's slender repast, and then again descended.

As the youth lay upon his couch, and glanced around that dimly-lighted room, it occurred to him how lonely he should feel did he not expect Inez to shortly return. So suddenly did that simple though potent thought come upon him, that he started, for it caused him to realise the depth of his affection for her, which he had never before imagined; and sighing, he closed his eyes.

Anon, light footfalls echoed faintly o'er the stairs, and a moment after Inez entered the apartment. Approaching the bed she gazed dreamily upon him, and mused:

"Dear Enrique! he sleeps. Oh, how I thank Heaven for his life, for mine is his. One moment I think he loves me, and then doubt enters my mind; but he lives, and I will teach him to love me."

Like sweetest music these words sounded upon his ear. He opened his eyes a very little, and gazed at her beautiful form so delicately moulded, and appearing more lovely in the dim light. He knew that he loved her. His heart beat more quickly, his being was thrilled as her words seemed to ripple again on his ear, and it required all his strength of will to restrain him from confessing to her his love.

(To be continued.)



[MARGUERITE DUPONT.]

MYSTERY OF THE BLACK DIAMOND.

CHAPTER XXVI.

SIMPLY arrayed in the plain black robes it seemed to her she should always wear now, Lady Violet left her private apartments the following morning.

She had breakfasted first, and it was her inclination to remain secluded in her pleasant and luxurious boudoir, as she had done mostly of late. But she had resolved overnight to desist from so timid a part, and return to her regular duties and avocations. She was not inclined either to even seem to avoid Conway.

"My best defence against him is to make him think I am not afraid of him," she said to herself, resolutely, and however her heart quailed when she thought of him, however much more it quailed when she saw him, she never suffered a shadow of that terror to be expressed in her beautiful, inflexible face.

She went first to the library. She had some letters to answer, and she fancied doing it there, where she and her father had so often sat together.

"Poor papa," she sighed, as she sat and saw everywhere about her the tokens of the deceased earl's presence, "I was a bad daughter to you in one thing, and all I tried afterwards could not atone. My disobedience blighted your life. It is going to blight my own. It is only just that it should."

She fully expected that Conway would intrude upon her at any moment.

She wrote her letters. The lawyers had signified that they waited her pleasure. She wrote to them to say that she would see them the following Wednesday. That was five days off. She little guessed who would meet these very lawyers.

While she was writing, Miss Miggs brought her a note from Conway.

He had gone to London, he said, to obtain the necessary proofs of that marriage which it was evident Lady Violet meant to deny. She would find that only death could dissolve the ties which bound her to him.

"Death it shall be, then," my lady said, softly, to herself.

She had detained Miggs while she read the letter. The pale, little, unobtrusive governess was like perpetual balm to her sore spirit. She put up her beautiful mouth now, saying, "Kiss me," and the velvety lips were quick enough to obey.

Captain Evelyn as he dashed up to The Nest after his encounter with Conway had cooled somewhat,

but the impress of what he had heard was still legibly enough imprinted on his handsome dark face.

Lady Evelyn met him at the drawing-room door, and stood aghast at sight of his blanched features. In brief words he told her all the result of his interview with Lady Violet, and Conway's monstrous communication.

Lady Evelyn listened incredulously.

"Of course the man was mad," she said, "with drink or something else. Are you sure it was not an escaped lunatic instead of Conway?"

The unhappy guardian shook his head.

"It was Conway fast enough, and he was neither drunk nor crazy. A liar he has always been, but the more I think of it, the more I think he has got some fatal hold upon Lady Violet. Not what he said," he added, with a shudder, "but power enough over her to compel her to be what he says she is now. He says she obtained his pardon for him."

"Impossible!" exclaimed Lady Evelyn, with emphasis; "she, an inexperienced girl, whom her father scarcely suffered out of his sight? The idea is an utter absurdity."

"The earl might have acted for her. No, that is impossible. His abhorrence of Conway was genuine and deep."

"I don't believe, for my part, that he has got any pardon at all. He has contrived to escape, you may depend upon it."

Captain Evelyn shook his head again.

"He had too assured and impudent an air for a man in hiding."

"Wasn't he disguised? Hasn't he been acting as the earl's own man? What did he call himself Turner for? What need has he of disguises, if he is a free man?"

Captain Evelyn looked perplexed and anxious. He rose with a heavy sigh, and began slowly to pace the floor.

"You see, aunt," he said, in that brotherly tone in which he always addressed his uncle's wife, "I have hoped against hope till now."

"And you may keep on hoping, for all that has happened to-day," said the countess, stonily.

"But Lady Violet has herself forbidden me to come to Eaglescliffe any more. Yet she permits Conway's presence there."

"As Turner, not as Conway. She does not harbour him, knowing who he is, depend upon that, Roy."

"She had some weighty reason for desiring my absence."

"The prudishness of a young girl, suddenly left her own mistress—nothing more."

"There was more than that in it."

"See here, Roy," said Lady Evelyn; "if you let that bold, bad Vane Conway impose upon you now, after all the experience you have had of his talents in that line, you will deserve to be cheated, that is all."

Her ladyship leaned from the window as she spoke and motioned to her husband, who was passing through the grounds. He came in, and she told him the news.

These three had sat in conclave before over the beautiful and slightly mysterious heiress of Eaglescliffe.

Lord Evelyn listened with a changing countenance. "I'm afraid it is true," he said. "I saw Ruggles this morning. He was just from London; and there was a whisper in certain circles there to this effect."

Captain Evelyn dropped into a chair; Lady Evelyn grew pale.

The earl hesitated a moment.

"You will have to give her up, Gilderoy."

Captain Evelyn drew a deep breath.

"Oh, Heaven!" he groaned, "I can't believe it."

"Tell us what Ruggles said," Lady Evelyn urged.

The earl glanced nervously at his nephew.

"Don't mind me," the young man said, drawing himself erect, and folding his arms sternly across his broad chest.

"The story is far from creditable to Lady Violet, and may be greatly exaggerated."

"Of course it is," Lady Evelyn said, glancing at Roy's set face. "Go on."

"Lady Violet had a sister once, perhaps you knew. They have not been in the habit of speaking of her. There was always some mystery. Well, it seems that Conway was her lover, and she ran away with him before her father came into the earldom. She killed herself, it is said, because she believed that Conway was about to marry her sister. The earl found out about it, and ordered his remaining daughter to discard him. Instead, she went secretly and married him; and when he was transported for forgery, she contrived, by some management, to get his pardon. Then, on his return, she introduced him into her father's employ under another name. He was so disguised and changed that Lord Eaglescliffe did not know him, and suspected nothing, till the morning of his death. Accident revealed the infamous truth, and the shock of the discovery killed him. That is the story."

"And a vile tangle of falsehood was never concocted," said Gilderoy Evelyn's deep tones.

The countess was silent.

"Beatrix Dudevant, it is whispered, is responsible for the story," Lord Evelyn added. "She was to have married the earl if he had lived, and was deep in his confidence."

"That accounts for the malice and falsehood of the whole thing," said his nephew, contemptuously. "Beatrix Dudevant has always hated and envied Lady Violet's superiority to her in every respect."

"Why, Roy," exclaimed Lady Evelyn, "Miss Dudevant came to Eaglescliffe as Lady Violet's dearest friend."

"I don't care; she hates her, and scandalises her. I wish she were a man, that I might shoot her!"

"What now?" said Lady Evelyn, as he rose, and began drawing on his gloves again.

"I'm going back to the Cliffe, to have Conway kicked out."

"And get kicked out yourself, more likely," said his uncle, angrily. "If Conway is master there, either secretly or otherwise, he won't stand upon ceremony with you. Don't go acting in your usual blind, headstrong way now, Gilderoxy."

Captain Evelyn stood irresolute.

"You know, Roy dear," said the Earl's wife, gently, "she wouldn't have me there at all, either before the funeral or after; and she wouldn't come here either, with that man in the house all the time too."

"So you've turned against her," cried Roy, pulling off his gloves and flinging them across the room savagely.

"She must have known it was Conway if Beatrix Dudevant did," said Lady Evelyn, humbly.

"Oh, yes, of course. You women are all alike. If one of you gets down you are all very careful she stays so, especially if she's worth a million of the rest of you!"

As he dashed out of the room, tears filled Lady Evelyn's soft eyes.

"I didn't mean to be uncharitable," she said to her husband; "but there seems, when you come to think about it, many little odd things about Violet Eaglescliffe that go to corroborate this strange story."

"Roy was excited—don't mind him," the earl said, soothingly, kissing his little wife, who was very dear to him.

"But if that poor girl is really Conway's wife, for her father's sake, we must stand by her. Would you have any objection to going with me to call upon her—say to-morrow morning?"

"None at all."

"We will go, then."

The young Countess of Eaglescliffe was still in the library, when the cards of the Earl and Lady Evelyn were brought her.

She frowned slightly, but rose at once to go to them.

"They have come to interrogate my father's daughter," she said to herself with irritation. "I dare say every family in the county will have to come now."

Both Lord Evelyn and his wife had unconsciously formed an imaginative picture of how Lady Violet would appear. But in the face of this astounding revelation concerning her relations with a wretch like Vane Conway, both were taken utterly by surprise at her stately grace and dignity.

Miss Miggs was with her.

Lady Violet had said at the last moment, as she was quitting the library, "Come, Miggs," and she came accordingly.

The pale little governess looked like some fragile, washed-out blossom beside the beautiful and queenly young creature she accompanied.

Lady Violet was not in the habit of waiting for emergencies to confront her. She generally anticipated them; but just now, out of sheer perverseness, she left Lord Evelyn and his wife to broach the hateful subject she knew was in their thoughts. It was on her lips more than once to say boldly:

"You came to tell me what Conway said to Captain Evelyn, yesterday," but she did not say it. Instead, she talked sweetly, as women can sometimes when their hearts are filled with pain and bitterness—talked of the weather, Lady Evelyn's little daughter, even Miss Dudevant.

Lord Evelyn rose at last.

"Can I speak with your ladyship privately?" he asked.

Lady Violet shrunk a little.

"I have no secrets from your wife and Miss Miggs," she said, deprecatingly.

Lord Evelyn sat down again with reluctance.

"Your father and I were very dear friends," he began. "I trust Lord Eaglescliffe's daughter would not misconstrue—"

The young countess interrupted him.

"My lord, it is not necessary that you should say another word. I appreciate your motives. They do you great honour. But I cannot permit you to

so much as mention the subject concerning which you came here to-day."

"Are you sure, Lady Violet?" he persisted, gently. "The countess and myself are here purely in the capacity of friends, prepared to stand by Lord Eaglescliffe's daughter in any emergency possible to her purity of soul and nobility of nature."

Lady Violet's beautiful, haughty face flushed deeply.

"I thank you, my lord, but I am quite sure."

And so perforce the noble and well-intentioned pair went away as wise as they came.

"Of course it is all true," the earl said, sorrowfully, to his wife. "There is no longer room for doubt. We must wait patiently this wilful girl's own time, and serve her in spite of herself."

"Miggs, you're worth half-a-hundred of them. You never ask questions," was the young countess's comment, delivered with an arm round the happy governess's frail shoulders.

"The more fingers there are in this pie the worse the pie will be. Don't you know that, Miggs?" she added, whimsically.

Miss Miggs did not speak, but she put up her thin dark hand, and touched the white one on her shoulder with a timid caress.

It was late in the afternoon of the same day that Lady Violet had another visitor—a woman, who came muffled and thickly veiled, warm as the day was, and asked to be left alone with the young countess before she would raise her veil.

Only Miggs was present, and she evinced a singular reluctance to leave Lady Violet alone with the stranger. She went, however.

"You do not guess who I am. How should you?" the stranger said presently, with her veil still down. Her voice had a cold and stern inflection, but it was sweet and musical as Lady Violet's own.

"Is it true," she continued, "that you are, or are about to become, the wife of Vane Conway?"

Lady Violet drew back in haughty surprise, looking with wide, keen eyes at her strange visitor.

"Your voice is familiar," she said. "I dare say I should know you quick enough if I saw your face. Who sent you here to question and spy upon me?"

"No one sent me. I came to save you, misguided girl, from life-long shame and degradation."

"Indeed," said Lady Violet, incredulously. "This woman is sent by some one to tell me once more what a villain the man I have married is," she said to herself. "Why can't they let me alone?"

"Would your ladyship oblige me so far as to send for Eleanor Lyle?" asked the stranger, coldly. "There is such a person in the house, I believe."

"There is not," said Lady Violet, with some emphasis. "She has gone away."

"Where?"

"I do not know."

There was a pause, Lady Violet growing more and more impatient, but withheld from positively dismissing her visitor by a feeling she did not attempt to analyse.

"You had a sister once?" questioned the stranger presently again.

Lady Violet rose wildly to her feet, but sat down again, murmuring "It is impossible."

"You pretended to love that sister very dearly, yet you married her destroyer."

"It is false!" Lady Violet said, turning white to her very lips.

"Did Lord Eaglescliffe die without telling you the name of the man who wronged Marguerite Dupont so foully?"

"He did not know himself."

"He did at the last. She told him."

Lady Violet grew faint as a sickening suspicion crossed her.

"If you know, tell me at once," she gasped, "and be done with it."

"It was Vane Conway," said the woman, in a low voice.

There was utter silence in the room some moments. Then Lady Violet leaned towards the stranger.

"Who are you?" she demanded, "who speak with such authority? I insist that you shall lift your veil and show me your face."

The woman tossed back her veil with a swift movement.

"I am Marguerite Dupont!" she said, harshly.

"My dear girl is encompassed by dangers," Miggs said to herself, as she reluctantly quitted Lady Violet's apartment.

She sat down not far away in the embrasure of a window, where the painted light fell about her small, spare figure like a halo.

"I can't do much for her, it's true. I'm only poor Miggs, but I've got eyes and ears, and as long as I have, they shall work for my darling girl."

The small governess had a great habit of talking to herself.

As she sat there, my lady's voice suddenly broke the stillness in a cry, short, sharp, agonised, and loud enough to pierce beyond the closed doors. Miggs bounded to her feet, and crept that way breathless.

"I was afraid all the time," she said to herself; "I can't hear it and be still."

She knocked timidly. Then more boldly; finally loud. At last the door was opened—by the stranger.

"What do you want?" she demanded, angrily, her veil drawn closely over her face.

"What have you done to Lady Violet? You have done something, for I heard her scream," Miggs insisted, grown bold for the moment, and trying to look beyond the woman: "let me in, or I will raise the house."

The stranger hesitated an instant, and drew back, muttering audibly, "It can't be helped now."

Miggs darted past her into the inner room.

Lady Violet lay back in her chairlike one dead, her eyes closed, her lips blue.

The little governess was too scared to scream, but she turned upon the stranger like a crazy woman, and tore off her veil, and clutched her by the arms.

"She has only fainted," the strange woman said. "She fainted at the sight of my face, and I believe you are going to do the same, idiot. Stop staring at me, woman, and see what you can do for your lady."

Miggs turned away at once, catching her breath like a drowning person, as she proceeded to chafe Lady Violet's hands, and apply various restoratives.

The stranger sat apart meanwhile, and waited.

The face from which the governess turned shuddering was asamed and scared, from some cause, to hideousness. The woman's own mother, on whose breast she had lain, would not have been able to recognise her, if she had not seen her since this disfigurement. Lady Violet's first word, when, at last, her lips moved, was "Daisy."

The stranger started to her feet, trembling violently, took a step forward, and fell on her knees before Lady Violet's chair.

"I was hard," she cried; "I was cruelly hard, sister, forgive me," with the tears raining down her seamed face.

"Go away," said Miggs. "Don't you see she can't bear it?"

But Lady Violet reached her hand down feebly, and clasped the stranger's, who covered it with tears and kisses.

Miggs stood jealously to her post, eyeing this ill-visaged woman distrustfully, till Lady Violet gently, but peremptorily, dismissed her.

Marguerite Dupont—for it was indeed she—had meanwhile removed her disguising wrappings at her sister's instance.

Beneath these she wore a robe, sombre in hue as Lady Violet's, and of far less costly material.

She was about her sister's height, and nearly as finely formed, and before her face became so disfigured must have resembled her strongly. They had the same hair and eyes, and their voices were similar.

"There is no one to recognise you, Daisy," Lady Violet said, as Miggs withdrew to the adjoining room. "Even he is gone to London to obtain the proofs of my marriage to him."

Marguerite came close beside her, and stood looking down at the exquisite face, which was such a contrast to her own scarred visage.

"Do you love him very much, sister?" she asked.

"Love? I hate him," exclaimed Lady Violet, with a shudder of repulsion.

Marguerite regarded her a moment with stern inquiring.

"If that is true," she said, "you would bless the hand that freed you from him."

Lady Violet sighed. The words had no meaning for her. What release could there be from bondage such as hers?

CHAPTER XXVII.

"We are sisters in our united aversion of that wretch," said Lady Violet, sitting upon the couch she occupied and drawing Marguerite down beside her. But Marguerite averted her face.

"I went to Australia with him," she said. "I have much to tell you, Violet."

"You? to Australia?" exclaimed Violet; "how—when?"

"I will tell you. I was only terribly burned at that fire, where he and most supposed that I died. I was saved by a miracle, as it were, and I should have escaped without these scars; but an ignorant young doctor experimented upon my poor face in the hospital."

"The wretch!" exclaimed Lady Violet.

"I was nearly well, when I learned one morning

by the merest chance that Conway had been sentenced to transportation. I had my jewels yet. They had been deposited with a banker for safe keeping. I wrote an order for them, presented it myself as some one else, and with a portion of the money I obtained for them bribed one of the prison officials to connive at my going in the place of one of the prisoners, a poor lad called Bob, who really deserved to stay behind. I disguised myself as Bob, and to make all sure, pretended to be deaf and dumb. You know my talents as a mimic."

Lady Violet replied with an exclamation:
"Oh! Daisy."

"I managed everything in a fashion. I was put on board the same vessel with him. I succeeded, mute as I pretended to be, in attaching myself to him. I was indeed a sort of comfort to him. He was very wretched, and thinking I could not hear him, he used to pour out his thoughts and feelings to me. It was very sad, and I used to feel quite wretched to think I was deceiving him. But if he had known who I really was, he would have driven me away from him perhaps, and I could not have borne that. Besides, before the voyage was done, something happened which made me thankful I had just acted as I had. Conway often talked of a letter Eleanor Lyle had written him while in the prison in London, and uttered such threats in connection with it, that I resolved to obtain possession of it. It had been torn by himself in a passion, I judged, and the pieces were carefully pasted on a sheet of paper for preservation. It was a long time before I secured it, but I did so at last, and when he missed it, he never suspected me of having taken it. Would you like to read this letter, sister? It is what brought me here to-day. It is what brought me here all the way from Australia."

Lady Violet took the letter mechanically.

"Does it concern me particularly?" she asked.

"You alone. Stay," said Marguerite, with solemn eyes on her sister's. "You meant it when you said you hated him?"

"I did mean it. Words cannot express the depth of my aversion for the man I married on an impulse of the most childish wilfulness and folly. I was only fifteen, Daisy, only fifteen, when I cursed my young life by linking it with his. Scarcely a waking or sleeping moment the thought of him has not poisoned since. Hate? It seems to me the word has not been coined strong enough to express how I loathe that bad, disgusting wretch. His wife? I will forsake the habitations of humanity and burrow in a hole like a fox, before I will acknowledge any such relation between us."

"Read the letter, sister," Daisy had kept saying, but Lady Violet was too excited to notice her.

When her eyes at last dropped upon the written page, the first words riveted her attention.

Her cheeks had fired, her eyes flashed, as she uttered her hatred of Vane Conway, the convict and villain.

As she read now, the red died slowly out of her face, but her eyes scintillated like magnets.

Involuntarily her sister stole an arm tightly about her, and glanced nervously towards the next room where Mirgas was.

It seemed as though Lady Violet would never take her eyes from the paper; but she did at last. The tears gathered slowly in those liquid depths, the proud, sweet lips began to quiver.

"Heaven is too good to me," she said, solemnly, "if this is true. Whoever I married that wicked night, thank Heaven, it was not Vane Conway."

"It was someone Conway hated, and wished to injure. He thought he was entrapping him into a marriage with me. So much I gathered from his rambling talk on shipboard," Marguerite said.

Lady Violet rose after a little, and went to her jewel-case, returning with a long and delicate chain, upon which was strung that curious jet circlet, which the reader perhaps remembers. The mysterious brilliant with which it was set blazed like a smothered flame, as it dropped upon Marguerite's extended palm.

"That was my wedding ring," Lady Violet said, quietly. "I found it on my finger when I got back to Eaglescliffe that fatal night."

Her sister looked surprised, as she curiously examined the ring.

"It must have been an accident. No man would deliberately marry a woman with such a ring as that; and I don't know how he could do so accidentally."

"It was not accident; it was fate!" said Lady Violet.

Marguerite looked at her.

"Are you so superstitious as that?"

For answer, Lady Violet repeated, without any excitement, the strange, seemingly meaningless words of the old prophecy traced in the monk's book by the hand of a man dead now more than two hundred years. Then, with a sudden change of mood, she said:

"Don't talk about the prophecy. Think what you like, but don't talk to me about it. Talk about the ring. Do you think there is another such in England? It must lead me to something, I should think—to some solution of the strange mystery of my life."

"Perhaps," Marguerite said, thoughtfully, "the man who put this on your finger is dead. Conway would scarcely venture to proceed to such extreme measures as he has if that other were alive. The risk would be too great."

Lady Violet threw the glittering links of the chain over her neck.

"I shall always wear it now till I know," she remarked.

Marguerite still held the ring.

"It would be easy enough tracing it," she said, "if it were not for the publicity you would have to venture. This is not a common ring. I never saw but one black diamond before. It has occurred to me whether this could possibly be the same."

"Where did you see the other?" demanded Lady Violet, in some excitement.

"It was in the possession of Sir Jasper Townley. It was unset, but it might afterwards have been put in a ring. It is very singular that there is no private mark upon it, not even a coat of arms."

"Never mind, put it away now," Lady Violet said, rather wearily, and laid the ring in the folds of her dress.

With her hands clasped loosely before her she began slowly to pace the carpet in front of the couch upon which her sister sat.

"That man may be back any day now, any hour even," she said, sternly. "I don't think there will be any occasion for either of us to see him."

Her sister did not speak.

"I will write him a few lines just to let him know that he is found out, and then if he does not go—"

Lady Violet's eyes flashed.

"Sister!" exclaimed Marguerite.

Lady Violet paused in her excited walk.

"My own Daisy," she cried, struck by the other's accent of pain.

"I don't hate him," said Marguerite Dupont, and covered her scarred face with her hands.

Lady Violet looked at her in frightened perplexity.

"Daisy, you must not, you shall not. Think how utterly outside the pale of any good woman's love he is."

"But I'm not a good woman. I hated even you when I thought you loved him. Ah, if I were the Countess of Eaglescliffe he would marry me even with this libel upon a human face."

"But, Daisy—"

"Don't argue with me," said Marguerite, irritably. "I know all you would say. I know how little cause I have to love him better than you do. When he got his pardon there in Australia, he left me who had served him like a footboy only for the happiness of being near him; who had suffered chains and blows, and to be herded with the vile for his sake; he left me behind as coolly as though I had been a worn-out glove. I had to confess the trick by which I came out. I had to humble myself to own my sex, before I could get permission to return to England. I was half crazed with agony and impenitence, for I knew where he would go first, what claims he meant to advance upon you. Don't argue with me, Violet. It is of no use. I can't hate him. I've tried, and I can't."

"Never mind! I won't," Lady Violet said, kissing her. "I won't hinder your seeing him even, if you choose."

"Would you hinder his marrying me if he would?" Marguerite said, sitting up, and eyeing her sister strangely.

"I could not do that," Lady Violet answered, evasively.

"Would you, if you could?"

"No; not if your happiness depended upon it," Lady Violet said, slowly.

"Would you help me, Violet, sister darling? Would you help me, if you could?"

Marguerite Dupont held both her sister's hands tightly clasped in hers; she was covering them with tears and kisses.

"Daisy, Daisy, what is this? What is it?" Lady Violet exclaimed in agitation and alarm. "Answer me. If I could help you to any happiness I would, certainly; but—"

Marguerite rose to her feet, stern and calm.

"You have promised," she said, solemnly. "I shall hold you to it. Think what you owe me, Violet. I shall hold you to your promise. To be Vane Conway's beloved wife one week I would be willing to suffer annihilation afterwards!"

Lady Violet looked shocked. She thought her sister had suddenly gone crazy with the long strain upon mind and heart.

Marguerite Dupont smiled disdainfully as she read the fear.

It was hours before she won Lady Violet's full assent to the wild scheme she had evolved in the really half-crazed chambers of her brain; and then it was amid almost intolerable misgivings.

"Only sorrow will come of it. Only sorrow, and worse, perhaps," Lady Violet prophesied.

"Let it! Let the worst come that can!" Marguerite Dupont replied, obstinately.

(To be continued.)

HOW TO CATCH FISH WHEN AT THE SEASIDE.

As the season is approaching for families going to the sea-side for sea-bathing, and generally for the health of the younger branches, I think a short account of a kind of occupation to which I was addicted years and years ago, under the above circumstances, and by which I was able successfully to enjoy the amusement of fishing, though there were no boats to be had, and no rocks from which fishing could be attempted with any prospect of success, except of the most meagre description, will be interesting to your young readers, and I hope may prove as profitable to them as I myself found it to be. I pretend to no originality for the plan I adopted, but it may not have occurred to many of your juvenile readers when located on the sea-shore, where there happens to be an extensive expanse of sand, that even there, with no boats, or rocks, or pierhead to fish from, still they may enjoy the excitement attending the capture of the finny denizens of the deep, with advantage to the family dinner-table and pecuniary profit to themselves.

My plan was simply a fisherman's "long line" in miniature, constructed as follows:—I provided myself with a main line of stout cord, about forty yards long; I got about six dozen of trout bait-hooks dressed on double-twisted silkworm gut, and I used up a piece of an old hair fishing line, by adding a short piece to the end of each of the above-mentioned twisted gut lines, making each of these branch lines about eighteen inches in length. I then fastened the end of each of these branch lines to the main line at one yard apart, leaving each branch about sixteen inches in length, so as to prevent them from being liable to get entangled with one another when the line was set in the water; two cork bungs and three flat stones completed my fishing apparatus, with the addition of a basket or box to carry my bait in, and also my line when going to or returning from the sea at low water. I had a considerable amount of occupation in providing bait by digging in the sand for sea-sand worms, and at very low tides I used to get sand eels, which are a first-rate bait.

I used to take my fishing apparatus down to the shore at low water, and, having previously attached the branches to the main line, I then stretched the main line loosely along the sand, and fastened each end to one of the flat stones before mentioned, having the line parallel to the advancing tide; the next thing to do is to bait each hook carefully with a piece of sand worm or eel, and having attached a bung to each of the two flat stones—one at each end—by a line about a yard long carry one end of the line, with the stone attached, into the sea, till in about two feet of water, beyond the pieces of weed floating in with the rising tide; put down the stone and see that the bungs float properly; then carry in the other end of the line, and do the same with it, taking care that the main line is not quite tight, but has a little play; your line is now set, and you had better remain near the place till the rising tide has concealed the bungs, and your line is not likely to be meddled with; and I need hardly add that I would strongly advise you to be down at the shore in good time to secure the fruits of your labour. The use I made of the third flat stone was to mark the spot where I had set my line, by placing it inshore of one of the other stones about 10 yards or so, so that when standing at that stone I would be sure to see one of the bungs. A line 40 yards long will accommodate about 60 hooks, and give one or two, or even three boys ample occupation in getting bait and preparing and setting the line. If the hour of low water suited, I used to get two hauls in the day, as, after taking off the fish I had caught, I immediately set the line again, and even at night, if there was moonlight, I found no difficulty in doing so; and no hour in the morning was too early for me. I used to catch eels, flounders, small whiting, coddings, and sometimes dog fish, and I sold the produce of my fishery to my mother, and then I helped to eat it. Try *Tide Fishing.*

BUILDING LAND, BRIGHTON.—Some plots of land sold lately, by order of the Town Council, realised the sums affixed:—Lot 1. Freehold plot of building land, numbered 78 in North-road, adjoining on the

east the site on which the Dolphin Inn is to be built, presenting a frontage to North-road of 18 ft. 6 in., with a width at the north end of 18 ft. 10 in., a depth from north to south on the east side of 40 ft. 2 in., and on the west side of 39 ft., 280f. Lot 2. Plot of freehold building land, abutting on the south to No. 5, Marlborough-place, possessing a frontage to Marlborough-place of 22 ft., alike width at the west end, a depth from east to west on the north side of 56 ft. 1 in., and on the south side of 56 ft. 7 in., 400f. Lot 4. Corner plot of freehold building land, 23 ft. to Marlborough-place and 57 ft. 3 in. to Church-street, having a width at the west end of 25 ft., and a depth from east to west on the north side of 57 ft. 1 in., 560f.

SCIENCE.

A FLOATING DOCK FOR NEW ZEALAND.—It is proposed to construct a floating dock at Auckland (New Zealand), capable of accommodating the largest ships visiting that port. The gates of this dock will be 40 ft. wide.

The Belgians first built the high blast furnaces and introduced them into England in the middle of the fifteenth century; and, in 1612, Sturtevant obtained a patent in England for smelting iron with bituminous coal; previously charcoal was used, and only two or three tons of iron could be made per day at one furnace.

PROFESSOR GOULD has found that the velocity of the electric waves through the Atlantic cables is from 7,000 to 8,000 miles per second, and depends somewhat upon whether the circuit is formed by the two cables or by one cable and the earth. Telegraph wires upon poles in the air conduct the waves with a velocity a little more than double this; and it is remarked, as a curious fact, that the rapidity of the transmission increases with the distance between the wire and the earth, or the height of the support. Wires buried in the earth likewise transmit slowly, like submarine cables. Wires upon poles, but slightly elevated, transmit signals with a velocity of 12,000 miles per second, while those at a considerable height give a velocity of 16,000 or 20,000 miles.

SINGAPORE WATER SUPPLY.—The question of a water supply for the town of Singapore is still undecided, but will, we understand, come on for discussion shortly, at the meeting of the Legislative Council. Mr. E. J. Wells, the manager of the Singapore Gas Works, now in London, has, we believe, sent out to the Municipal Council fresh estimates for works capable of supplying 1,500,000 gallons daily at a total cost of £3,200l., under the high pressure and gravitation system. All attempts on the part of the Government to obtain a supply of water having failed, it is hoped that the matter will be left in the hands of the Municipal Council. With the settlement of this question, we hope some plan will be decided on for connecting the new harbour with the town by means of a tram or railway, which would not only remove the present slow, dirty, and intolerable means of conveyance for both passengers and goods, but improve the condition and value of the land en route. At present the road is most offensive, and sadly mars the natural beauties of the neighbourhood. We may add, it is a disgrace to Singapore.

PATENT VICTORIA STONE.—There is no doubt that for paving purposes this stone is quite equal, if not superior, to Yorkshire flag-stone, while there is a difference in the cost of the material of at least 50 per cent. in favour of the patent stone. Its use is, however, by no means confined to paving purposes. It can be used for any purpose, either of utility or ornament, in which stone could be employed; and as it can be made in different colours, the variety of natural stone can be imitated with good results. The stone is formed of granite and hydraulic cement, steeped by a patent process in a solution of flint, which makes it nearly as hard as granite itself; and in process of time it becomes harder and harder. Thus, a slab of the concrete, 2 feet broad and 2 inches thick, resting loosely on supports of 2 feet apart, will bear, in about ten days' time, an average of about 700lb. weight in the middle. After being steeped in the flint bath it will sustain about 1,050lb.; in about five months' time about 1,700lb.; and in nine months' as much as 2,400lb. This great increase of strength is attributable to the gradual hardening, by time, of the flint, which is first thrown down in a state resembling jelly. The crushing strength, as certified by Mr. Kirkaldy, is 6,441lb. per square inch. Thus, a block or brick of the patent stone, presenting a surface about 6 by 9 inches, sustained a weight of nearly 160 tons, or the weight of eighty coal carts full of coals heaped one upon another; and a foundation of

the patent Victoria stone could sustain a solid tower of stone about 6,441 feet in height.

ANCIENT HORSESHOES.—The Greeks and Egyptians practised horse-shoeing in a manner which, so far as can be ascertained, consisted in applying a kind of sock or sandal, fastened about the leg with straps, and shod with iron or other metal, for strength and extra wear. These were probably not generally employed, but were used only in cases of disease or injury. It is highly probable that the primitive horseshoes were made of raw hide, stitched or laced upon the foot. The ancient Britons do not seem to have known the art of horse-shoeing. The first indications of this practice, so far as archaeologists have been able to discover in England, belong to what is known as the Romano-British period. There is, therefore, little doubt that horseshoes were introduced into England by the Romans. Specimens of these horseshoes, more or less preserved, have been unearthed in various localities. They appear to have been without toe-calks, but have heel-calks like our modern horseshoes. They have mostly three nail holes in each branch of the shoe, and instead of a groove in each branch, like the shoes of the present day, have large oval depressions for the heads of the nails. These depressions were evidently stamped in while the iron was hot, which operation spread the metal so as to form three distinct scallops on each side of the shoe. The Anglo-Saxon horseshoe was in its earlier forms a cumbersome and ill-shaped affair, not comparable in regularity of form to the Roman shoe, but its outer edge is not scalloped like the Roman shoe.

TRANSFORMATION OF CAST IRON.

The following interesting details give the outline of a new system for the transformation of cast iron into wrought iron and steel, by means of the vapours of alkaline metals. In order to cause the vapours of sodium and potassium to act on cast iron in fusion, one of the former metals is heated in a iron retort to 392 deg. or 482 deg., under a pressure of five or six atmospheres. When this heat is reached the vapour thus obtained is directed into the heart of the iron in fusion; the mass swells, and an alloy of the iron is the result. These alloys, although very hard, are malleable, and may be forged and welded. They oxidise rapidly in air or water, and are easily decomposed if a current of air, steam, or carbonic oxide is injected into them when in fusion. By these compound effects of the vapour of sodium and of air, for example, the whole of the metalloids in the iron are attacked, and the final result is pure wrought iron that can be hammered and welded with ease. Under certain circumstances the metal resulting from the operation may present the properties of steel. Finally, to facilitate the production of the metallic vapours, carburets rich in hydrogen may be added to the sodium or potassium in the retort.

In place of sodium or potassium an alloy of the two may be used, as, for instance, one composed of four parts of potassium (melting at 122 deg.) and 2.5 parts of sodium (melting at 194 deg.). This mixture, which has the appearance and consistency of mercury, has its point of solidification at 47.4 deg., and is consequently liquid at ordinary temperatures. It is prepared under naphtha. It has been remarked that, besides the direct transformation of cast into wrought iron or steel, by means of the metals, their action produces other advantages; they allow of the employment of cast irons, which, although containing manganese, are reputed bad, and cannot be converted by the Bessemer process, on account of the quantity of carbon, sulphur, or phosphorus which they contain. It is, in fact, now proved that the Bessemer process, far from eliminating the sulphur and phosphorus, tends rather to augment the proportion of these metalloids.

The cast irons known as *chaudes*, and which contain silicium and magnesium, owe a part of their superiority to the calorific power of the silicium (7800), the produce of the oxidation of which, silica, requires but little heat to disengage it, so that the liquefaction becomes more complete. On the other hand, carbon, under the same conditions, gives rise to the disengagement of masses of sparks produced by the gases carbonic acid and carbonic oxide, which traverse the mass; these take from the molten matter a considerable quantity of calorific, and thus are unfavourable to liquefaction.

By the above-detailed process this latter inconvenience is partly dispelled, for the gases produced by the combustion of the carbon, sulphur, and phosphorus combined with the soda or potash are mechanically carried through the mass of metal by the oxidation of the sodium or potassium.

The direct action of the sodium or potassium, in the form of vapour, on the melted iron, may be replaced by adding to the mixture of ore, fuel and flux, either chloride of sodium, carbonate of soda, a corres-

ponding salt of potash, or a mixture of these. Acting thus on any given ore, and using coke or coal as fuel, a result analogous to that obtained with charcoal under the ordinary system is obtained. We must add, however, that in the former case the current of hot or cold air should be longer maintained than when charcoal is used; this prolonged application of hot or cold air in the blast furnace may present inconvenience, which can be avoided by directing the alloys of cast iron with sodium or potassium into a converter, in which they may undergo the final action of the current of air; with this process the working of the blast furnace is the same as in ordinary cases.

An assimilation of the coke or coal with alkaline salts corresponding to those furnished by wood charcoal is arrived at, either by watering the fuel with the alkaline solutions above mentioned, and then allowing it to dry in sheds, by introducing the salts into the mass of molten iron, or, lastly, by pouring a concentrated solution of the various salts on the fuel or the ore, at the moment of charging the furnace.

THE ARCHITECTURAL ALLIANCE.

THE ninth annual meeting of this body has just been held at 9, Conduit-street, Mr. T. R. Smith in the chair. The following delegates were present:—Mr. Rickman (Hon. Sec. of the Alliance), Mr. J. D. Mathews, and Mr. R. P. Spiers, as representatives of the London Architectural Association; Mr. J. B. Botham, of the Birmingham Architectural Society; Mr. H. H. Statham, jun., of the Liverpool Architectural Society; Mr. Thomas Oliver, of the Northern Architectural Association; and Mr. T. O. Hine (Vice-President of the Alliance), representing the Nottingham Architectural Association. Mr. Drew, of the Institute of Architects of Ireland, was also present as a visitor.

After some discussion, the following resolution was agreed to:—"That the Royal Institute of British Architects be invited to meet the delegates of the Architectural Alliance, consisting of the following allied societies (mentioning their names), once a year at their annual meetings."

The next subject brought under discussion was the custom, law, and expediency of an architect retaining his plans.

Mr. Hine said his experience supported the universal practice of retention.

Mr. Drew cited a case which occurred forty years ago in Ireland, and which was identical with Mr. Barry's case. The architect of the Public Board of Works in Ireland, Mr. Murray, was paid 500l. a year, and a percentage of 5 per cent. on all public buildings. He did the work in a public office; his clerks were paid by Government; the Government made a change, and called upon him to confine himself to the duties of the office with an increased salary. He resigned his office, but refused to give up any drawings he had prepared while holding office, and succeeded in retaining his plans.

Mr. Oliver said that having succeeded in a competition for the North Riding Infirmary, after carrying out the works, and upon rendering up the building to the corporation, he was asked by the town clerk to deliver up the drawings. He maintained they were his own property. The town clerk said the corporation would go to law. He (Mr. Oliver) said that if they would not make it expensive he would join them in a friendly lawsuit, for the purpose of settling the principle. The committee, however, dropped the matter, and he retained his drawings.

Mr. Drew said a similar case was that of Mr. Rogers, against whom proceedings were commenced by the town council of Cashel, because he retained his plans. He consulted counsel, who very strongly advised him not to give up a single paper. It was to be presumed that the town council also consulted, and received similar advice, for the matter was dropped. He knew of other similar cases.

Mr. Hine said it was his practice to bind up the plans, bills of quantities, contract, and every paper connected with it, into one book, the custody of which had always remained with him as the umpire between builder and client, without dispute by either.

After a lengthened discussion, the following resolution was agreed to unanimously:—"That, in the experience of the delegates present, the custom of the architect retaining his plans of the buildings which he has carried out has been universally adhered to, and that it is desirable it should be maintained."

The following resolution was also carried unanimously:—"That in the opinion of this Alliance it is very desirable that the Royal Institute of British Architects institute examinations in the provinces."

The following officers were then elected in place of those retiring:—Mr. Hine as President; Mr. Rickman as Vice-President; and Mr. Douglass Mathews as Secretary.



REGINALD WARNER.

CHAPTER XIV.

It was a bright sunny morning when Vivian and the convict bade adieu to Naples.

"See Naples and die," the proverb says," remarked Vivian, with a smile. "So, I suppose we are now ready to make our last wills and testaments."

"I feel very little like dying," answered Craven. "And then we have Rome before us, my boy—Rome, the city of the Cæsars and the popes—Rome and its ruins, with the Coliseum, the grandest of them all."

Vivian had purchased two horses and a commodious English travelling carriage, large enough to contain themselves and all their luggage, and had hired a driver. Less favoured individuals might patronise the rail; but, with plenty of gold in his pocket, and unlimited letters of credit, the young Englishman could well afford to move leisurely and untroubled.

Both Count Fialto and Craven had succeeded in banishing from his mind all fears of brigands, and did so the more easily since he was brave, even to rashness. So they set forth with no escort, and no provision against contingencies but a brace of Colt's revolvers apiece, which the convict undertook to keep loaded and in good condition constantly. Vivian laughingly appointed him his armorer.

Their route lay to the north-west, but they diverged from the highway and pursued their journey by roads familiar to Craven, who had been over the ground before, and indicated the turnings to the driver.

The first night, spent in an inn about twenty miles from Naples, passed without incident. They had taken a plentiful supply of provisions with them, so as to make up for the deficiencies of the out-of-the-way public tables they would probably meet on their journey.

The second day, the road selected by Craven began to ascend from the valleys, and to wind along the flanks of the mountains; but the scenery was so wild, recalling so vividly the savage landscapes of Salvo Rossa, that Vivian did not begrudge the jolting of their carriage over the ruts and stones that beset their path.

But here their troubles began. The driver more than once came near upsetting them, and when Craven, who spoke Italian fluently, took him to task for his carelessness, he replied by a volley of oaths; then both the young men perceived that the fellow was brutally intoxicated. They ordered him to halt, and sprang out of the carriage, and while Vivian held the horses' heads, Craven grasping the driver's

collar with a hand of iron, pulled him from his box, and gave him a shaking that half-sobered him.

Instantly the fellow drew a knife; but Craven, who was quick as lightning, produced a revolver, and striking the man's wrist with the barrel, compelled him to drop his stiletto, which he secured by setting his foot on it. Then he coolly levelled the weapon at the man's head.

Beppo—for so he was called—instantly set up a drunken howl of despair, and falling on his knees, crossed himself, and begged the signor to have mercy on him, a husband and father of a family.

"What do you mean?" asked Craven, sternly.

"I have drunk nothing, signor, but what you gave me," hiccuped the fellow.

"I've half a mind to pull the trigger for that lie," answered Craven. "We dismiss you on the spot. A twenty-five miles' walk to Naples will do you good."

"But I'm a poor man, signor."

"Here's money for you," said Craven, tossing him a handful of gold.

"If you'll only try me a little longer, gentlemen," implored the man.

"No," said Craven; "it's clear that you're an incorrigible sot."

The man rose to his feet sullenly, and eyed Craven with a ferocity that showed how dangerous he would have been had he been only armed.

Then he turned his face in the direction of Naples, and staggered away over the stony road.

"What's to be done now?" asked Vivian.

"I'll take the reins," answered Craven. "I know every inch of the road. At the next station we can get a faithful driver, who will take us to Rome, and there we can have our pick of coachmen for the rest of our journey."

So Vivian took his seat in the open carriage, while Craven mounted the box and soon showed himself an accomplished whip. But he had need of all his dexterity and coolness, for the road grew more narrow, rugged, and steep every moment.

"This is the worst part of the way," said Craven, encouragingly. "An hour's ride will bring us to a better road."

"I had no idea this part of the country was so lonely, savage, and desolate," said Vivian. "If there are any brigands left, this would be a chosen point for them."

"Brigands! pooh!" replied Craven, with a laugh. But the words were no sooner out of his mouth than, as he had secretly anticipated, the road turned into a narrow defile, they saw the figure of an armed man seated on a projecting rock, his outline sharply defined against the bright blue sky. As the carriage appeared in sight, the man rose, and putting his hands to his lips gave a shrill

whistle, which was repeated from both sides of the path and in front.

"By Heavens! we are attacked. But we are armed," cried Craven, and the two young men drew their revolvers and prepared for the defence. Vivian not dreaming that the weapons contained only blank cartridges.

But what could two men do against twenty? At least that number of savage armed miscreants rushed upon them from an ambush.

Both the travellers fired, and two of the brigands fell, as preconcerted between Craven and their leader. But the assailants were dauntless, and their apparently desperate valour and numbers carried the day. Vivian and Craven were mastered and bound, and were compelled to see the outlaws strip the carriage of all its contents.

The horses, terrified by the firing, were plunging madly, but were held in the iron grip of two muscular brigands, while their comrades removed the trunks, valises, hat-boxes, and other effects.

When this was accomplished, the two men above referred to led the horses to the brink of a precipice and turned their heads to the awful chasm. Then, letting go the bits, they discharged their carbines within an inch of the horses' ears, and the frenzied animals springing forward, and pulling the carriage after them, fell through space three hundred feet or more, and were dashed to pieces on a colossal pile of granite rocks that lay in the heart of a gorge which the foot of man had never trod.

At a signal from the leader, who had not spoken a word during the engagement and the scene which followed, and whose face was concealed by a mask of black crape, the gang fell into some kind of order and began the difficult ascent of the mountain path, with the prisoners in the centre of the column, half-a-dozen ruffians, bending under the weight of their effects, bringing up the rear.

They steadily climbed the mountain for two hours, and at last reached the foot of a ledge overgrown with Alpine vines and shrubbery.

Here the leader stooped and pulling aside a curtain of dense foliage, disclosed a narrow aperture in the rock, which he entered by crawling on his hands and knees. The rest of the party followed, singly, in the same manner. After creeping along a few yards, the passage became loftier and wider, and they were able to stand erect again. After proceeding a little further, this species of natural vestibule opened into a large and lofty circular cave, ventilated by spiral openings leading to the outer air, and lighted up brilliantly, not by torches, as might have been expected, but by wax candles in splendid candelabra, the spoils of a formidable raid upon a neighbouring villa.

Articles of luxury were scattered about in savage profusion. There were carpets spread on the rough floor, rent here and thereby contact with the rocks. On a rough pine table, and on shelves in niches, were cut-glass goblets and pitchers, bottles of wine, boxes of cigars—also a store of substantial viands.

At a rough, improvised fireplace, at one side of the cave-chamber, an old crone was preparing a substantial repast, watched eagerly by a dozen men who had taken no part in the morning's expedition, and were either squatting on their haunches or lying face downward, the red firelight blazing on their swarthy faces and picturesque attire.

The leader seated himself, and his followers and the prisoners followed his example.

It seemed that there were other chambers opening out of the large circular cave, the entrances being veiled, generally, by coarse *baize* curtains. One, however, was curtained by rich damask drapery, which, suddenly parting in the centre, gave passage to a young girl of singular beauty, with black hair and black eyes, and a superb figure. Strange to say, she wore an elegant blue silk walking-dress of the very latest Paris fashion, just come from the hands of a professional *modiste*. Had such a figure been seen on a Paris boulevard or a Neapolitan promenade, its fitness to the scene would have been obvious; here the apparition created a singular feeling of incongruity.

The young girl rushed to the brigand chieftain and threw her arms about his neck.

"Safe, father?" she asked.

"Yes, safe, *Zerlina*," answered the brigand. "I have brought back captives and spoils."

He pointed first to the travellers, and then to the huge pile of their effects.

The young girl glanced disdainfully at the latter, but riveted her piercing black eyes on the men. Her glance rested but a moment on Craven, but it dwelt upon the fair face of Vivian, whose beauty was well calculated to fix the attention of a woman, and her expression softened from a look of eager curiosity to one of compassion. The feeling of pity, however, if such it was, was but transitory, and she instantly resumed the proud and haughty look habitual to her.

"You had better retire, my dear," said the brigand, "now you are satisfied that I am safe. I have business before me."

The girl bowed and went back to the recess from which she had just issued, but before she dropped the heavy curtain she cast one more quick glance at Vivian, and then disappeared.

"Well," said Vivian, addressing Craven in English, "we are in his power. Ask him what he proposes to do with us."

Craven spoke to the brigand chief in Italian, of which Vivian knew but a few words, so that it was impossible for him to make out what it was his travelling companion was saying.

Matteo Orsini—for he was that formidable outlaw—listened attentively, nodding his head from time to time.

"Tell him I am willing to pay a fair ransom," said Vivian, "but if harm comes to either of us, he shall bitterly repent it."

Craven and the brigand exchanged a few words.

"What does he say?" asked Vivian.

"He says that threatened men live long," replied Craven. "I am afraid we have to deal with a very hard character."

Directly after this Orsini made a sign, and said a few words to two of his followers.

These men—they were the same who had held the horses—rose and signified to Vivian that he must go with them.

"Am I to be separated from you, Craven?" asked Vivian.

"It appears so," replied Craven.

The two robbers took Vivian, who was still bound, between them, and lifting one of the curtains, drew him into an arched passage-way, perfectly dark at the farther extremity. Here they halted, and the prisoner heard what he took to be the noise of heavy bolts shifting back, and a key turned in a lock; and his impressions were correct, for a door was opened, and he was dragged into a cell dimly lighted by an aperture in the roof, and furnished with an iron bedstead and stool and a rough deal table, on which stood a pitcher of water and a loaf of black bread.

Once inside this dungeon he was unbound, his captors retired, and the heavy door closed, barred, bolted, and locked on the outside.

Meanwhile Orsini took the other by the hand, and presented him to the members of the band.

"Comrades," said he, "this gentleman is one of us—the bravest and wisest of the League of which he and I are members—a man who has escaped from the prison at Toulon, and baffled the bloodhounds of the French police. He has betrayed yonder Englishman into our hands, and abandons all his spoils to us, only claiming for himself the prisoner's papers and letters, which are of no

earthly use to us. Generous as well as brave, I invite you to give Conrad Rivers a warm reception. He will be our guest for some time."

The ruffians crowded round Conrad and shook hands with him eagerly and heartily. His reputation was known to most of them.

The brigand chief then proceeded to the distribution of the spoils. Each robber received a handsome sum in gold, the leader claiming only a double share, and being made trustee of the jewellery, which was to be converted into cash and divided at the earliest opportunity, with the exception of a valuable diamond pin, presented by unanimous vote to *Zerlina*, the daughter of the chief.

She was summoned, and received the gift like a queen receiving the tribute of her vassals. She bowed her acknowledgments in a stately manner, but did not express them in words.

The correspondence, journal, passport, and letters of credit belonging to Vivian Warner were delivered to Conrad, to whom was assigned a small but comfortably-fitted recess, the size of an ordinary bed-chamber, opening out of the great central cave. Thither all Vivian's effects, not already distributed, were carried.

This business ended, supper was served on a table formed out of planks laid on trestles slightly raised above the level of the floor. The chieftain, *Zerlina*, and Craven being accommodated with cushions covered with piles of furs or folded carpets, but most of the brigands squatting round the board.

After they had gorged and drunk sufficiently to satisfy their coarse natures, the privates of the band retired to a dormitory fitted up with rough bunks, except those detailed to act as sentries on the descent of the mountain, leaving the leader, *Zerlina* and Craven together.

"Where is the Englishman?" asked the girl.

"In the dungeon," replied her father.

"Is he held to ransom?" she asked.

"He is held a prisoner for the present."

"And to be fed on bread and water?"

"Prisoner's fare, *Zerlina*," replied the father.

"I will not have it so," she said, imperiously.

"It is bad enough to keep him in that hole. You shall not starve him, if I have to carry him his meals myself."

"Take care, *Zerlina*," said Orsini, sternly. "Don't meddle with things that do not concern you."

"But it does concern me," she said, "to see you, who were born a gentleman, degrade yourself to the level of the vile natures that surround you."

"It is a long time since I was a gentleman, *Zerlina*," said the bandit, with something like a sigh of sorrow or regret.

"You have not lost the instincts of one, I hope," said the girl.

"Very well," said the brigand; "I can refuse you nothing. He shall be well fed, if you insist. But mind that his safekeeping is essential to my well-being. I am pledged to hold him."

"Pledged to this gentleman, I suppose," she said, eyeing Conrad somewhat disdainfully.

"Enough, *Zerlina*," said the brigand, impatiently—"enough! Go to your room, my child. I have important business to discuss with my comrade."

The girl rose and retired, leaving the two men alone.

"I can't keep him a prisoner for ever," said the brigand.

"I don't wish you to do so," answered Conrad. "At the end of five or six months, he shall be out of your hands and disposed of."

With a look of inquiry the brigand drew the edge of his hand across his throat.

"Not if it can possibly be avoided," answered Conrad. "I have ever been averse to the shedding of blood. Only to save my life, or to escape complete ruin, would I resort to violence. You don't anticipate being driven from this stronghold, Orsini?"

"No. The bravest troops would hesitate to follow me into this fastness, where two score men could defy an army. The approaches are mined, and before the enemy could reach me, I could blow them into kingdom come and retreat yet further back into the mountains."

"Then any message would be sure to reach you here any time within six months?"

"Ay, if I live; and I really seem to bear a charmed life. I doubt if the bullet is cast that is to kill me. But you are not going away in a hurry."

"No; I must perforce tax your hospitality for some weeks. For that period of time I must be a hard student. You work with lead and steel—I with brains. The plan that is fermenting in my head requires great preparation, great deliberation and consummate audacity to ensure its success. But you shall know all hereafter."

The two outlaws shook hands with each other, and Conrad retired to the nook assigned him.

CHAPTER XV.

SOLITARY confinement, after a time, crushes the proudest spirit. When three days had passed in his lonely cell, Vivian Warner was sadly changed from the gallant and high-spirited youth who had set forth on his travels with such high heart and hope.

From frantically chafing at his wrongs, he had succumbed to that dreary depression which is the second phase of the prisoner's experience.

He had no fear that his life was in immediate danger, for he could not conjecture how any one could be interested in making away with him. But liberty to him was as dear as life. The idea of separation from his beloved, anxiety as to the fate of his travelling companion, uncertainty as to the duration of his captivity, depressed his heart as with a leaden weight.

Beyond the deprivation of freedom, he could not complain of the treatment he received after the first night. On the morning of the second day his jailers brought a supply of blankets and furs which rendered his bed comfortable, and from that time luxurious viands were substituted for the coarse fare of his first meal.

About noon of the third day, when the prisoner was quiet but not reconciled to his fate, his door opened for the entrance of a visitor.

A female wrapped in a crimson cloak, and wearing a long, thick veil, was admitted to his cell. As she laid aside these articles of dress, she revealed the brilliant face and queenly figure of *Zerlina*, the brigand's daughter.

There was a kindly look in her great black eyes, and her voice was sweetly modulated, as she bade the prisoner good morning.

"I trust, maiden," said Vivian, "that you are the bearer of good news. You ought to be able to tell me how long I am to be kept in this hole. I am willing to pay a heavy ransom for my liberation, and you can so inform my father."

"Alas! signor, my father will accept no ransom; and he means to hold you a prisoner for an indefinite period."

"For what purpose?"

"That is a secret between him and Conrad, Rivers."

"And who is Conrad Rivers?"

"Your travelling companion—the man who betrayed you into my father's hands."

"My travelling companion a traitor! Why, he fought bravely by my side!" exclaimed Vivian.

"Hush!" cried *Zerlina*, putting her fingers on her lip. "Speak lower; the sentries at the door might overhear us. I overheard my father and the man on whom you blindly relied talking to each other, and surprised a part of their plans and secrets. I tell you that the pretended English gentleman, the Hon. Augustus Craven, is an impostor and a felon! I heard him boast how he had charge of your arms and withdrew the balls from the weapons. I know, too, that our men loaded their carbines with blank cartridges when they sallied out to the attack."

"But two men fell in the skirmish!"

"They were unhurt."

"Your story is most surprising," said Vivian; "and yet there is an air of sincerity about you—"

"Oh, believe me, signor," said the girl. "Do you think if I were not speaking the truth I should implicate my own father, as I have done? And before I proceed further, you must give me your pledge, your word as a gentleman, that nothing I tell you shall be used to his disadvantage. I abandon the principal criminal—the traitor—to your just vengeance; but my unhappy father must not be involved in the results of this disclosure. If you knew what wrongs—what misfortunes drove him to the mountains, and armed him against society, you would pity rather than condemn the fallen noble—for he once bore a family name illustrious in Roman annals, and my birthright placed me in an elevated rank. But this is all gone; we are irretrievably lost—outlawed—banned—doomed to an ignoble death, if taken."

Tears, for a moment, dimmed her long black lashes, but she dashed them angrily away.

"But no matter what I was or might have been," she added, "I am now a brigand's daughter—and I glory in it."

"So young and so perverted!" thought Vivian. He added aloud: "I am at a loss to know to what I am to attribute the interest you take in me, signora."

The dusky cheeks of the Italian girl burned crimson, and the drooping lids veiled her splendid black eyes as she cast down her head. Then she looked up again, and her native boldness reasserting its supremacy, she cast upon the youthful prisoner a glance so passionate as to reveal her secret.

In him, when they first met, she had recognised her ideal—her affinity—the idol of her dreams; and three days' brooding over his image had developed into uncontrollable energy the love of a fiery, undisciplined southern nature.

"I have resolved to make an effort to free you," she said, giving Vivian her hand, which, in the new-born hope her words awakened, he welcomed with a friendly pressure.

"You bring me happiness, signora," he said. "Listen," she said, drawing near to him, "the time for action has arrived. All our people have gone excepting two men who guard the door of this dungeon. By the exercise of my partial authority I have gained admittance to you. I have left for their refreshment a flask of what they suppose to be light Italian wine, but it is mixed with a fiery spirit, which will numb their senses. Put on my veil and cloak, and the chances are that you will pass them unchallenged. Leave the cave by the passage directly opposite to the one leading hither. It is dark and winding, but will lead you to the opening of the cave. Once in the free air you have only to descend the mountain in a south-westerly direction, keeping under cover of the rocks and bushes, and it will bring you to the highroad to Naples."

"But you, signora?"
"I will remain behind."

"In the first moment of indignation your father's violence may endanger your life."

"No; he dotes on me. Poor father," she said; "little does he dream of my ingratitude. Your flight will not be discovered till to-morrow morning, at the usual hour of visiting your cell. I shall pass the night here comfortably enough."

"But you will be missed?"
"That is true; but our people will not return till a late hour. You will have time enough to secure your flight. You accept my proposition?"

"With gratitude; you give me liberty."
"Perhaps life! Conrad's scheme, which I have not been able fully to fathom, may embrace your death."

"And how can I reward you? What amount of money?"

"Money!" interrupted Zerlina, with flashing eyes. "That is like you Englishmen. Your offer is an insult. I give you life and liberty—you offer me money in exchange."

"Pardon me, signora. But what can I do to testify my gratitude?"

"You can give me the equivalent of liberty and life: you can give me happiness!"

"I do not exactly understand you, signora," said Vivian.

"You are heartless and cruel!" cried Zerlina. "Not satisfied with making me your slave, you want to abuse and degrade me. But no matter; I am completely in your power. Give me your address in Naples, and before two days are over I will join you. Do not spurn me," she added, as Vivian shrank away from her in amazement. "I cannot live out of your sight. To be near you, I would serve you in the most menial capacity. I would be your page—your footboy, even; I am used to disguises; and though unused to labour, I would learn it for your sake. Only let me go with you to the ends of the earth!"

"But what would my wife say?"
"Your wife!" exclaimed Zerlina, turning pale. "So young and already married?"

"Not yet—but shortly to be," replied Vivian. "And the sting of my imprisonment is that it keeps me from my bride."

Zerlina's face assumed a hard, cruel look, and her lips were set firm.

"She shall wait long enough," she said. "Those words have sealed her fate—and yours."

She resumed her veil and cloak and moved towards the door. But she turned to throw a last glance at the prisoner and saw him sink down, crashed, shivering, the picture of despair.

She turned back once more, and again threw aside her veil and cloak.

"Look at me!" she exclaimed, as she drew herself up to her full height, and stood before him in one of those graceful and statuesque attitudes which the commonest Italian women assume without an effort. "Look at me; and tell me if this bride of yours is more beautiful than I."

"Her beauty is of a different type," replied Vivian. "Yours is peerless, signora. Titian and Raphael never painted more glorious models of Italian womanhood."

"You admit, then," said the girl, with a smile of gratified vanity, "that you are throwing away a masterpiece of nature."

"A loyal nature never forsakes its first love," said Vivian, soothingly. "My hand and heart are pledged to another."

Zerlina turned away her face to conceal her emotion. In a few moments, when she again looked upon the prisoner, her features were calm. She was holding a diamond breastpin in her hand.

"This is your property," she said. "My share of the spoils."

seeing that Warner hesitated to receive it; she added, with a blush, "It is an old family ring, and was mine when I bore an honoured name. There is no stain upon its lustre."

After this explanation, Vivian, though with extreme reluctance, took the ring.

"And now," said the girl, hurriedly, "fly!"
With her own hands she wrapped him in her cloak and veil.

"Go," she added, in a broken voice. "Be happy—but sometimes, when you are far away, think of poor Zerlina."

"My poor girl," said Vivian, "if you desire to escape this dreadful life, I will try to secure for you a respectable position either in France or England; and you shall want for nothing while I live."

"No, no," she said, faintly. "I will abide where my lot is cast. I have had a bright dream, and been rudely awakened. But I will try to forget it."

She gave Vivian her hand, and then suddenly threw her arms about his neck, and kissed his lips.

"Your bride will forgive me," she said. "It was a first and last kiss. Farewell."

Then she knocked at the door, and ordered the guards to open it and let her out.

They obeyed, and Vivian passed them unchallenged, Zerlina remaining in the dungeon.

Slowly, and with a beating heart; the young Englishman crossed the main cave, and entered the passage which Zerlina had indicated as the pathway to freedom. There was no sentry at the outlet, and he stood once more enraptured in the open light of day.

Then, remembering the cautions of the brigand's daughter, he sought the cover of rocks and bushes, and began the descent of the hillside.

Halfway down the flank of the mountain there was an open space to be traversed, and Vivian halted on the verge of it, deliberating whether to push on or to lie in ambush until nightfall. The difficulties and dangers of pursuing his flight in the darkness, however, the possibility of meeting the returning brigands at a late hour, and above all, his impatience to reach a place of safety, decided him to risk crossing the opening. As he was disguised the peril did not appear very great.

He had left his shelter and advanced only a few yards, when a hoarse voice shouted "Zerlina!" and before he could regain the cover again, Orsini stood at his side.

"What is my child doing alone so far away from home?" asked the brigand.

Receiving no answer, for Vivian's presence of mind utterly deserted him at this unlucky crisis, the outlaw drew aside the veil and hood of the scarlet cloak, and instantly recognised his prisoner.

"Malediction!" he cried. "How came you here? And how came you by this dress? Have you turned robber?"

Vivian disdained to reply.

"Mute as a fish," said the brigand. "Very good. Right about face; you're going in the wrong direction. How lucky I happened to meet you. Lend on—I'll follow you; and harkoe! if you don't keep the path and obey orders, I'll send a brace of bullets through your head."

And the ruffian emphasised his words by unslinging and cocking his double-barrelled carbine.

Vivian was wholly unarmed, and the brigand was a walking armoury of weapons—of course, submission was imperative.

With a heavy heart, the prisoner began to climb the stony pathway, his captor following close at his heels. Orsini had torn off his victim's disguise, and carried the veil and cloak on his left arm.

They soon reached the cave, where Orsini, grasping the prisoner by the collar, at the same time placing the point of a stiletto at his throat, carried him back to his dungeon.

Zerlina uttered a cry of agony when she realised the failure of her scheme, and yet she felt a secret joy at seeing the Englishman once more.

"Take your traps, girl," said the brigand, tossing her the veil and cloak, "and follow me. As for you, young gentleman, I hope this fruitless effort will reconcile you to seclusion and good treatment."

Matteo Orsini addressed no questions to his daughter, but escorted her to her room. Only he said at parting:

"This little frolic will cost you a day's seclusion, my girl."

He pushed to a door in the passage-way not often used, and locked it.

Then he sought out Conrad, who was busily engaged in the cell which had been assigned to him, and informed him of what had happened.

Conrad meditated on the information a long time, and then he said:

"Yes," replied the brigand. "There is a secret hiding-place, well secured by bolts and bars, at some little distance from this series of caves, that is known only to me and two of my trustiest men. You reach it by a trap-door perfectly concealed, and by a flight of stone steps."

"Then do you yourself place the prisoner there, and let one of the confidential men you speak of supply his wants. I myself will occupy the apartment where the prisoner now is until I am ready to leave. I wish to be entirely secluded till the scheme I am planning has been perfected. You can give out to your daughter and your people that I, Conrad Rivers, have left on a secret expedition."

The plan was carried into effect at once. Orsini dismissed the two men remaining in the cave, sent off the old woman who did the cooking on a distant errand, and himself transferred the prisoner to his new dungeon.

Then Conrad took the prisoner's place, and it was arranged that Orsini himself should attend to his wants, so that the substitution should not be noticed.

That evening, when all were assembled, including Zerlina, the brigand announced that Conrad had left them for an indefinite period, and that Vivian Warner, after a fruitless attempt to escape, was still under lock and key.

CHAPTER XVI.

DURING six weeks Conrad remained in seclusion, visible to no one but his host, Orsini. He was perfectly comfortable in his limited quarters, for the brigand naturally took the very best care of one of the most accomplished, daring, and successful members of the criminal league to which they both belonged.

These days and weeks of involuntary seclusion were not passed in idleness by the inmate of the dungeon. On the contrary, the convict had never worked harder in his life; for successful villany entails severer toil on its perpetrators than honest industry.

No German student ever worked harder than did this bad man. He had before him a heap of documents belonging to the unfortunate Vivian—a journal of several hundred pages in length, written in a very fine hand, a mass of letters addressed to him, and copies of his replies; all of which the felon committed to memory.

Besides this, he practised counterfeiting the handwriting of his victim till he had attained a degree of skill which bade defiance to the scrutiny of the most accomplished expert.

During all this time a change in his personal appearance was going on. After letting his hair grow to a great length he cut off all the dyed portion, removed the heavy whiskers and beard which had formed an essential part of his disguise, and the stains which had darkened his complexion having worn off, he appeared once more a fair-haired, blonde young man, with a light moustache, the living image of his victim. Arrayed in a suit of Vivian's clothes, which fitted him perfectly, his transformation was complete.

Orsini himself was so struck by the metamorphosis that, had he not just visited his prisoner, he could have sworn that Vivian Warner stood before him.

It will be remembered that Reginald and Ralph Warner were exactly alike, and each had transmitted to his offspring a likeness of himself. From father to son this was a peculiarity in the Warner family, as in some others.

One day Orsini announced to the assembled band that he had decided to release his prisoner.

Though the will of this man was law, for his services had been such as to ensure him the entire confidence of his followers, still this announcement was not received unquestioned. One of the men asked what ransom had been exacted.

"None," replied Orsini. "But, by the threat of mutilation, I have extorted from him most valuable information, which will lead to the acquisition of a richer booty than you ever dreamed of. His liberty will be no loss to us, I can assure you."

Zerlina heard the announcement with heartfelt joy. She had schooled herself to give up all hope of winning Vivian, but still she took a deep interest in his fate. She had repeatedly implored her father to set him at liberty, but he had remained stolid and indifferent to her appeals.

At last she beheld him, as she supposed, once more. Orsini himself brought out the prisoner. No eye detected the counterfeit. Vivian's own mother would have acknowledged the convict as her child.

To keep up appearances, Conrad was secretly blindfolded, as a real prisoner would have been, to prevent the possibility of his recognising the road to the robber's haunt by which he was conducted to freedom.

Then four of the brigands took his luggage, while Orsini guided him. As he left the cave-chamber a

soft hand pressed his own, and a voice whispered in his ear:

"Farewell for ever, signor. May the saints protect you. Forget not Zerlina."

He returned the pressure of her hand, on which Zerlina recognised her ring, for her father had taken it from Vivian and bestowed it on Conrad.

The convict was escorted to the edge of the high road, where his luggage was deposited and the bearers sent back to the cave. Orsini remained a few moments with his fellow-felon, who tore the handkerchief from his eyes, and looked his comrade in the face.

"Farewell, Orsini," he said, "If I succeed in my plans you will never regret having aided me. But you must keep my double safe."

"Dead men tell no tales," said the brigand; "suppose I stop his supplies, and let him die of starvation?"

"No," answered Conrad, with a shudder. "I abhor murder. Besides, I have a sort of superstitious fancy that assassination would bring me ill luck. If my plans succeed, I shall win a fortune."

"They must succeed," said the brigand. "You are the living image of the man you personate."

"In all save one thing," replied the convict, gloomily.

"What is that?"

"The brand of crime, burned deep in my shoulder! But that is irremediable. It shall be hidden from every eye. Farewell."

Conrad was in rather an embarrassing condition. He could not leave his luggage, and he might have a long time to wait before a conveyance turned up. Fortune, however, seemed determined to smile on this audacious villain, for in less than half an hour an empty cabriolet appeared going in the direction of Naples.

He hailed the driver, who was at first alarmed at his appearance, but soon satisfied himself that the solitary wayfarer was no brigand, and reined in his horses.

Of course the man, who had just conveyed a party to Terracina, and was coming back without a fare, was overjoyed to meet with an unexpected customer.

Accordingly the impostor and Vivian's baggage were soon rolling luxuriously along the road.

Had it been possible Conrad would have reappeared in Naples without remark, but the garrulous vetturino would have been sure to tell every one how he had found his passenger standing alone by the roadside, and that would force an explanation, which he had better anticipate.

Therefore, as soon as he alighted at the hotel which he and Vivian had patronised on a former visit, and had been overwhelmed by the attentions of the landlord, he told that person the story which he had resolved to adopt.

To the astonishment of the landlord, who interrupted him with many exclamations and apostrophes to all the saints in the calendar, he related how he had gone towards Rome in company with Craven, safely until they reached the mountains—how there Craven had dismissed the driver whom he had purposely rendered intoxicated, and then had himself driven the carriage directly to a place where the brigands had been waiting to receive them.

The landlord was astounded to learn that the pretended Englishman, Craven, was an ally of the robbers, but was delighted to hear from the impostor's lips, that he had not lived to boast of his villany and enjoy its fruits, but had been killed by a random shot in the skirmish.

When Conrad told how he—Vivian Warner—had been stripped of all his money and jewels, except the ring he wore, which he had succeeded in hiding, and how, after six weeks passed in a dungeon, he had been liberated, owing to the intercession of the daughter of the brigand chief who had taken a fancy to him, the landlord could hardly wait for the conclusion of this romance, so eager was he to circulate the news, make a hero of his guest, and thus promote the business of his establishment.

In half an hour the story circulated from mouth to mouth.

In less than that time the reporter of a newspaper had visited Conrad and obtained all the particulars of his adventures for the evening edition.

A secret agent of the police next waited on him and made more minute inquiries than the newspaper reporter had done. His object was to obtain such information as might lead to a successful raid upon the brigands. But of course the convict gave no such intelligence. He said that as soon as he had been captured he had been blindfolded, carried to the robbers' haunt and thrown into a dungeon in the rocks,—that the men who visited him were invariably masked, that the man who set him at liberty was masked also, and had blindfolded him when he led him to the road to Naples, whither he had conducted him by circuitous paths bewildering by their intricacy and the number of their turnings. The only face he had seen was that of the brigand's daughter, Aurelia, and he described her by the very opposites of the real Zerlina.

The convict expressed the most furious indignation against the brigands, and denounced the Italian authorities in the true style of an irritated Englishman. When his discourse took this turn the police agent discreetly brought his visit to a close.

The evening of his arrival at Naples, the convict, supporting the character of Vivian Warner, answered a letter of Mr. Reginald Warner to his son, which he found at the banker's, expressing great anxiety at his long absence. In his reply, he repeated the story he had told to the landlord, and inclosed the report of his adventure which appeared in the evening newspaper. He announced that after visiting Rome he should start for England, pleading his impatience to see Miss Vane after a separation which had threatened at one time to prove eternal.

Then there was a letter from Miss Vane to be answered. With all Vivian's love-letters before him, the consummate counterfeiter found no difficulty in catching their style, and his epistle was as fervent and impassioned as the most enamoured bride could desire.

Not caring to be lionised in Naples, Conrad, after closing Vivian's account at the banker's, pushed on to Rome, where he spent a few days, and got the cash for his stolen letters of credit.

At Marseilles, which he next visited, he found a merchant vessel bound for England, secured a passage and set sail for England.

CHAPTER XVII.

On a fine September morning the vessel on board which Conrad was a passenger sailed up the Thames with her canvas distended by a topsail breeze, and was soon after made fast to her berth in the East India Dock.

One adventurer called a cab, was driven to Claridge's Hotel, where he registered his name as Vivian Warner, and was assigned an elegant drawing-room with a bed-room opening out of it.

Here he made a most elaborate toilette, and prepared for his first visit to the Vanes.

The time passed with the brigands and on the passage had enabled him thoroughly to study the character he had assumed and to identify himself with it. He had made himself so familiar with the antecedents and associates of Vivian Warner, that there was no danger of his forgetting himself for a moment. His tenacious memory recalled every incident of Vivian's intercourse with the Vanes at Paris, and what had not passed between them under his own observation he had learned while travelling in Vivian's company and enjoying his confidence. He knew all the plans of the lovers, and recalled many of Miss Vane's remarks which Vivian had confided to him, so that he could secure his position by repeating to her things she could not dream of being known to a third party.

In fact, he had blotted out of existence his former self, and it was no longer an effort for him to speak and act like the unfortunate man he personated.

He drove therefore to the Vane's house, perfectly prepared and self-possessed.

Sending in his card, he was received by Mrs. Vane, a pale, elderly lady, who gave him the warm welcome due to an accepted son-in-law.

Mr. Vane was in his counting-room; Clara had gone out for a drive. Conrad's face was the picture of lover-like despair at this announcement.

At last a stylish equipage drew up before the house.

Mrs. Vane, looking from the window, said: "That's Clara—excuse me for a moment," and went out into the hall to meet her daughter, on whose fair forehead she imprinted a kiss.

"There's a gentleman waiting for you, Clara," she said.

There was a tell-tale smile on the old lady's lips, which set poor Clara's little heart beating wildly. She glided into the drawing-room and was locked in the embrace of Conrad the Convict.

"Dear, dear Vivian," she said. "To think what you have undergone, poor love! If I had not received the news of your captivity, accompanied by the intelligence of your escape, it would have killed me."

"Think, dearest," said the convict, "what I must have suffered in that mountain cave, believing you lost to me for ever. That my hair did not turn gray, that I did not go mad, is a miracle of kind Providence. There were times when reason tottered on her throne. But all that is passed."

"But how did you come? I didn't see your name in the list of passengers of the steamship that has just got in."

"I came by a sailing vessel from Marseilles."

"You were very eager to see me, then," said the young lady, with the slightest touch of irony in her tone.

"My health had suffered from my long confinement," said the impostor, "and the physician advised a sea voyage. You would scarcely have known me if you had seen me as I looked when I set sail."

"I should know you even if you were disguised," answered Miss Vane. "My heart could not deceive me."

"Are you certain, fair lady?" thought Conrad. After Mrs. Vane had left the lovers together a sufficiently long time for the exchange of their first raptures and confidences, she reappeared in the drawing-room, and the morning passed very pleasantly.

In the afternoon the carriage was called, and Conrad and Miss Vane were driven to the park.

The happy girl was delighted to point out to her lover the splendours of her native city, the evidences of its wealth, and the beauty of its adornments; and he was duly enraptured and surprised at all he saw.

As they were returning through the park they met Mr. Vane, cantering slowly along on a pondevous bay horse. This was a daily duty he performed with exemplary punctuality.

He reined in his horse, and greeted Conrad with the utmost cordiality. It was the first knowledge he had of the young man's arrival.

He went home, riding beside the carriage. Conrad dined and passed the evening with the Vanes.

The convict went to bed that night in a very happy frame of mind.

"Thus far, all goes well," he thought. "A rich girl already wooed and won to my hand, a liberal father-in-law, a fashionable mother-in-law, a rich father. Decidedly, this is preferable to Toulon."

Then he thought upon the brand he would carry to his grave, and clenched his teeth in silent wrath. Every thought was for himself; not one rested on the unhappy victim of his villany, then lingering in a mountain cavern.

"Anything new in the papers," asked Dr. George Manners, a fashionable young physician, as he was eating a hurried breakfast at his club, while a boy was waiting with his brougham at the door. The companion he addressed was a young gentleman of fashion, known as Buck Hamilton among his friends.

"Here's some fashionable news," said Hamilton. And he read:

"Among the arrivals at Claridge's Hotel, yesterday, we have to chronicle that of Vivian Warner, Esq., whose capture by the brigands near Naples, Italy, and subsequent abduction, were narrated to our readers last month. Mr. Warner is about to marry one of our most fashionable belles, Miss Clara Vane, only child of Mr. Vane, the opulent merchant prince. The engagement is no longer a secret."

"The doctor heaved a sigh.

"Do you know, George," said Hamilton, laying down the paper, "that I thought at one time that you were sweet on that girl?"

The doctor looked round to see if there were any listeners, and then, bending over the table, replied in a confidential whisper:

"I was; and it would have been a match, but for a difference in our tastes."

"A slight difference?"

"No, a very important one. I adored Clara Vane, but Clara Vane did not adore George Manners, and in fact, very cruelly refused him. This is entirely confidential."

"Of course it broke your heart!"

"I was very much cut down at first; but I have entirely recovered from the shock," said the doctor.

"And you can hear of her marriage with another?"

"With perfect equanimity. I am glad of her engagement, if her fiancé is a worthy fellow. Though no longer a lover of Miss Vane, I am proud to be ranked among her truest friends. But please keep all I have said entirely to yourself. And now, good morning, for my patients are getting impatient. I leave."

"Bye, bye, old fellow," said Hamilton, and the doctor ran away and drove off in his brougham at a speed which indicated a pressure of professional engagements.

(To be continued.)

SINGULAR INSTINCT IN A DOG.—A very remarkable illustration of the power of instinct in the dog is being given here. Some eight weeks ago the animal—quite a young one—was purchased by a party in Wick from the tinkers at the Cove on the north side of the bay. On the first Sabbath after his transfer he was kept within doors, under strong protest and ineffectual attempts to get out; but on every one of the six Saturdays since then he has regularly disappeared from the house, remaining away till about breakfast-time on Monday morning, when he has again presented himself. During the whole of the week he never gives any indication of a desire to leave, but regularly as nine o'clock or thereby of Saturday comes round, "Victor" takes French leave, spending his Sabbaths with his old friends at the

Cove. How he knows when Saturday night comes is a matter for those versed in natural history to explain.—*John o' Groat's Journal.*

A FLANK MOVEMENT.

"Mr dear Ellen, you must not anticipate trouble from this. If my uncle will not give up his foolish plan—if he will not listen to reason—he may do as he pleases, for I shall not certainly accommodate him."

"But, Philip, you must not lose all this for me. I should never—"

"Hush! It is not your heart that speaks thus, my Nell. I tell you candidly, I shall be sorry to drop the 'great expectations.' I have held from my uncle's promised bounty; and I shall be still more sorry to lose his friendship; but I cannot sell myself; nor, my own darling, can I surrender your sweet love for all the wealth of all the uncles in the world. So consider it settled, Ellen. I am young and strong; and, thanks to my uncle's bounty thus far bestowed, am well educated in the profession I have chosen; and I must be a sad apology for a man if I cannot carve out a comfortable sustenance for myself, and furnish a home for you. No more, Ellen. Let the matter rest as it is. My uncle may relent. For the sake of the old love that is between us I hope he will."

Ellen Lee retired to her widowed mother's house, and Philip Upham turned toward his own home, thinking, as he went, upon the circumstances which had led to his present unpleasant situation. And those circumstances were as follows:

Philip's parents both died when he was a child, and he was left in the care of the only near relative he had in the world—his father's younger brother, Benjamin Upham. Benjamin had no family of his own, nor had he a local habitation; so he found a good boarding-school for his nephew, and promised, if the lad behaved himself, to start him well in life. At length, when Philip was sixteen, uncle Ben took it into his head to go to Australia; and there he remained for the space of nine years, flourishing exceedingly, and amassing a fortune. And at the end of these nine years he returned to find his nephew grown to be a man of five-and-twenty; graduated from college with honour; and ready for admission to the bar as a lawyer.

"Good," said uncle Ben, when he had learned of the young man's progress. "I've got a nice plum for you, Phil—a golden plum. I've made more money than I can ever spend. And, my boy, I've got another prize for you. You know I used to write to you about my chum, Dan Willis. Dan and I were close partners while he lived. We worked together, played together, prospected together, lived together, and slept together. And our fortunes were much alike; I had only one near relative living, and that was my nephew Phil. He had only one near relative, and that was his niece, Jane. I used to read her letters to him, and he used to read your letters to me. I tell you, Phil, that girl's letters used to make me cry. She's a paragon—a treasure—a perfect marvel—and she's just about your own age, my boy. Wasn't it natural that we should talk much of you two? And wasn't it natural that we should connect you together? Of course it was. And finally we came to plan that you should be married to each other. Jane should have her uncle's fortune, and you should have mine; and then we two old chaps would sling our hammocks under your roof. But poor Dan wasn't to come back. He died in my arms, Phil; and I promised him the last thing that I would take care of his money, and look out for his niece. I told him she should be to me the same as my own. And then he died happy. And so, Phil, I've got a good wife picked out for you. I've seen her picture, and I tell you she's handsome. I'm going after her as soon as I can, and I shall bring her here; and I want you to love her."

And this was what had crossed the path of Philip Upham's happiness. He had found that his uncle was firmly fixed upon the consummation of his plan—that it was, in fact, a darling project; and he had been informed that he could take Jane Willis for his wife, with his uncle's love and fortune; or he could throw the whole away, and go out into the world and shift for himself.

"My dear boy," explained uncle Ben, "I know you'll love the girl. You must love her. If you could read her letters as I have read them—away out in the wilderness, amid gloom and danger—when a gleam of light from the old home was like an angel's visit—and such letters! Zounds! Phil; if you turn the cold shoulder to Jane Willis—But you won't do it, my boy. You'll love her when you see her, I know you will; and my promise to my dying chum shall be made good."

"My dear uncle," ventured Philip; "if you love the lady so well, why don't you marry her yourself?"

"Marry—her—myself! Me—me marry? Why, I'm old enough to be her father! Me marry? Don't you know, you scamp, that I hate the very idea of being tied to a woman?"

"Then why will you force the tie upon me?" "Silence! Don't I know that you have a weakness that way? Didn't you write to me that you would gladly marry a girl you could love? But I'll hear after her to-morrow."

And it was while uncle Ben was gone after Jane Willis that Philip and Ellen met as we have described.

Poor Philip! He loved his uncle, and would have sacrificed much to please him; but he could not sacrifice the love of Ellen Lee.

Meantime Benjamin Upham arrived at the town where Jane Willis lived, and found her engaged as governess in the family of a dear friend. She had not taken the situation from necessity, as the bounty of her uncle rendered her independent; but she had done it for the sake of employment, and also from love of the woman she served.

Mr. Upham was very warmly received; and when Jane knew that he was the man who had been her uncle's friend—the man of whom that uncle had written so much—the man in whose arms that uncle had died—and, in short, the man who was now the guardian of her property, she felt a warmth of love and esteem which manifested itself frankly and freely.

Jane Willis was four-and-twenty, and a true type of pure and exalted womanhood. Her beauty was of the sunshiny kind, warm and radiant, gathering more of its inspiration from the grand impulses of the heart than from classic mould of features. She had not remained thus long single because no one had sought her hand; but because she had not yet received an offer from the man whom she could love and honour. A womanhood like hers, pure and truthful, seeks for its companion the man true and strong—the man that can be honoured and trusted as well as loved—the man upon whom the trusting wife may lean with full assurance of protection in every hour.

Benjamin Upham was delighted. He found his protégée even more lovely and loveable than he had been led to anticipate. And no sooner had she shown that she trusted him, than his heart warmed towards her with a great love.

For be it known that Benjamin Upham was a stout, strong man, with a big heart, and with big emotions; and he was a grand looking man, too—just such a man as your fashionable street-lounger would never care to molest—a man of stalwart frame, and of muscular mould. And Benjamin Upham was forty-eight. He looked at young people, and called himself old. And he felt the older, perhaps, because, eight-and-twenty years before, he had been jilted by an empty-headed flirt, since which time he had resolutely set his face against all youthful enticements, accounting woman's love as vanity, and looking only for comfort in the calm of old bachelorhood.

Jane had been informed, through her uncle's letters, of the plan entered into between Mr. Upham and himself concerning her marriage with Philip; so she was prepared to listen, without surprise or unwonted emotion, to uncle Ben's speech upon the subject. But the subject was not broached until the third day after his arrival, when Mr. Upham and his protégée had come to an understanding very friendly, and very pleasant.

"But," said Jane, "you must remember that your nephew has never seen me. He may not love me."

"Zounds! girl, he shall love you! When he sees you he can't help it. He must love you; and you must win him. My heart is set upon it."

"Aye; but how is it with his heart, sir? If he does not turn to love of his own accord, we may not force him."

"Hark ye, Jane: I'll come a flank movement against him."

"A flank movement, sir?"

"Yes. That's a movement by which we take an enemy unawares—take 'em on the flank, when we can't attack them boldly in front—and double 'em up before they know it. I'll manage it. You shall go down to Boxville with me, and I'll take a house—I've got one in my mind—and put you in as mistress of it; and then I'll bring the young man under the battery of your bright eyes and warm smiles—eh? How's that?"

Jane Willis was not averse to going with uncle Ben, and assuming the care of his house; but be sure, dear reader, she cared little for conquest of the nephew. Ever since she had grown to womanhood she had known the uncle by reputation. The letters of her own uncle had been full of him—had recounted his brave and generous deeds, his acts of devotion, his goodness, and his truth—so that she had learned to love her uncle's dear and trusted

friend long before she saw him. And now that she had seen him, she had found a strong, bold, frank, honest, and true man; and as for his years, she knew them not—she only knew that he was younger in spirit and manly vigour at forty-eight than were many of the degenerate men around her who might have called him father.

And so Jane Willis came with uncle Ben to Boxville, where a house was taken and handsomely furnished, and where she presided as the domestic genius of the household—the queen of the castle—the guardian of its peace.

And very soon uncle Ben was in full march upon his flank movement. Philip was called, and installed as a permanent resident.

"Zounds!" said Benjamin Upham to himself, "if the young man can withstand that battery, he's got a harder heart than most men."

But Benjamin Upham did not take into account that his nephew was already a prisoner of love, having surrendered at discretion to another power.

So the weeks passed on, and finally uncle Ben concluded that he would demand a surrender. But, alas! the flank movement had been made in vain. The enemy had not been "doubled up" at all.

"Do you mean to tell me, Phil, that you won't love Jane Willis?"

"I do love her. No man could truly know her without loving her. But I do not love her as a man should love the woman he would make his wife."

"How is that, you scamp? Zounds! I've nursed a pretty specimen of a viper in my bosom! But—really, Phil, do you mean to tell me that you won't try to love her?"

"My dear uncle," said the nephew, honestly, "would you have me learn to love a woman who can never return my love?"

"No—you know I wouldn't. But Jane is not that woman."

"She is."

"Eh? She won't be your wife?"

"So she has frankly told me."

"Phil, you are lying to me! I know better!"

"Ask her and be convinced."

"Egad! I will; and if I find that you have—but wait."

Uncle Ben sought Jane Willis, and asked her if she had refused to be Philip's wife.

Jane trembled, and bowed her head as she replied:

"I have told Philip that I could not love him as a wife should love her husband."

Benjamin Upham sank down upon a chair like one upon whom has fallen the knell of doom. He had come to regard the bright, sweet presence as necessary to his very life—all his great love had gone out upon her, and he could feel now that his heart's tenderest cords would break in sundering the tie. And yet it must be so. How else, if she could not marry with Philip? Such an awakening from the blissful dream was like death—worse than death—a crushing to atoms of all the hopes that had made life worth living for—the entailing upon him of rayless, lasting night! And he bowed his head upon his hands, and groaned in bitterness of spirit.

"Benjamin!"

He felt a hand upon his shoulder, and upon looking up he met the gaze of Jane Willis. It was a bright, warm gaze, and tears were in her eyes.

"Oh, Jane—my sweet, dear pet! And must I lose you?"

"I shall not go away until you send me."

"But you will not marry Philip?"

"I cannot give my hand where I cannot give my heart."

"And yet—you—will stay with me?"

"If you say so."

Uncle Ben leaped to his feet, and caught her right hand in both his own. A new light had beamed upon him, irradiating his manly face, and lending a lustre supernatural to his clear blue eyes.

"Jane!—Jane!—Will you be mine?—my wife? Can you love me?"

And upon his bosom, with his strong arms inclosing her as in a wall of defence, she confessed that she had loved him from the first—loved him alone—loved him with all the strength of her heart and soul.

"Well, uncle, what did Miss Willis say?"

"None of your business what she said! But you may as well know now, as at any time, that you can't have her. So, if Ellen Lee has still a mind to throw herself away upon you, I shall not try to save her from the sacrifice."

Not long afterwards Phil knew the whole truth, even to the plan which his uncle had laid out for his capture; and just as the double wedding was about to take place, he could not resist the impulse to tilt at his respected guardian in this wise:

"Look ye, uncle Ben, how about that flank movement of yours?"

"Zounds!" cried the strong man, gathering Jane to his side as he spoke, "I regard it as the greatest movement on record."

"But you didn't quite capture your nephew."

"No, you young scamp; but I captured a prize a thousand times more valuable. Look at this!—Ah, Jane! don't hide your face. Bless your dear, good soul! I am just commencing life, and you are the light set to guide my feet in the way of joy and peace!" S. C. J.

LEIGHTON HALL.

CHAPTER XXVI.

Before the beginning of years,
There came to the making of man
Time, with a gift of tears,
Grief, with a glass that ran;
Pleasure, with pain for leaven,
Summer, with flowers that fell;
Strength, without hands to smite;
Love, that endures for a breath;
Night, the shadow of light;
And life, the shadow of death. Swinburne.

MR. BURTON, of whom little has been said, except that he was a Stock Exchange bull, was not a very frequent visitor at his own house in the country. He liked the dust and heat and noise of the city better than the green fields and cool river which encircled his country home in Oakwood. So the handsome town house was always kept open for him, and two or three servants retained to keep it, and there he slept and ate his solitary meals, and lived his solitary life, while his wife and Georgie were away enjoying the good things which money and position can buy.

Occasionally, however, there came over him a desire to see his wife, and then he packed his valise, and took the train for Oakwood, usually surprising its inmates, who, never knowing when to expect him, seldom did expect him. He had come thus suddenly the very morning after Georgie's interview with Maude, and announced his intention of spending the entire day, and possibly remaining over until the morrow, provided there was anything worth while staying for.

"Oh, there is! There's the croquet party at Leighton Place this afternoon, and you'll go, and I'll have you on my side, because you are capital at a long shot," Maude Somerton said, hanging about her uncle's chair, and evincing far more delight at seeing him than his wife had done.

Mrs. Burton was a good woman, a very good woman—and a proper woman, a very proper woman. She always kissed her husband when he came to Oakwood and when he went away, and inquired how he was, and how the servants were getting on, and asked for one or two hundred pounds, as the case might be, and deferred to him in a highly respectful manner, pleasant to behold. But she never hurried out to meet him as Maude was wont to do, nor threw her arms around his neck, nor smoothed the thin hair from his tired brow, nor said how glad she was to have him there.

Maude loved him as the brother of her mother, and the only father she had ever known; and almost the only heart-beats of affection the business man had felt in many a year were called up by the touch of Maude's sweet lips to his, and the clinging of her soft fingers about his own. So, though he hated croquet and could see no sense in knocking about a few wooden balls, he consented to join the croquet party; and then remembering that he had not seen Georgie yet, he asked where she was.

Georgie was ill—had a violent headache—in her own room, and toast and tea had been carried to her; and Mrs. Burton's medicine-box, and Mrs. Burton herself had been sitting with her when her husband came in, and reading her a letter received that morning from a man of high standing, who had written asking Mrs. Burton's consent to address her daughter.

It was an eligible offer enough, and but for one obstacle Georgie would have thought twice before rejecting it, for she knew better than any one else how fast her youth was fleeing. That obstacle was the genuine liking or love she had for Roy, and the hope that she might yet be fortunate enough to win him.

Never until this morning had she felt so much disposed for talking freely with her aunt of her future and her growing fear, lest after all her years of waiting Roy Leighton should eventually be lost to her.

Nervous and weak from the effects of last night's interview with Maude, and the headache from which she was suffering, she could only bury her face in her pillow and cry when her aunt read the would-be lover's letter and asked what answer she would return.

"I had hoped to see you settled at Leighton ere this, but Roy does not seem as much inclined that way now as he did some time ago," Mrs. Burton remarked.

And then the whole story came out, and Mrs. Burton understood how passionately her niece loved Roy Leighton, and how galling to her pride it was to have her name coupled with his so long without any apparent result.

Mrs. Burton was roused, and resolved at once to strike a decisive blow. Roy had no right to play "fast and loose" with Georgie, as he certainly had done. Everybody supposed, or had supposed, that they were engaged, and he had certainly given them reason to think so, and done enough to warrant Georgie in suing him for breach of promise if she would stoop so low as that, as of course she would not.

Mrs. Burton was not one to expose herself or her family to public ridicule. What she did would be done quietly and with no chance of detection from the world.

It surely was a providence which sent her lord home on that particular day, and after kissing Georgie affectionately, and bidding her to think no more of the match or of Roy either, as it was all sure to come right, she sought her husband, and found him in the library with Maude, who had been telling him of her engagement with John Heyford, and whose face was suffused with blushes when her aunt came in.

Of course Mrs. Burton had to be told also, and she behaved very properly, and kissed Maude twice, and said she had done well; that Mr. Heyford, though poor, was a very estimable young man, and a brother of Georgie. This last was evidently his chief recommendation to the lady whose infatuation with regard to Georgie was something wonderful.

It was not Mrs. Burton's way to skirt round a thing or to hesitate when a duty was to be performed; but on this occasion she did feel a little awkward, and after Maude was gone, stood a moment uncertain how to begin. At last, as if it had just occurred to her, she said:

"Maude's engagement reminds me to tell you that Georgie has just received through me an offer from that young Brownlow, whom you may remember having seen last summer."

Mr. Burton was very anxious to resume the paper he had laid down when Maude came asking an interview; but he was too thoroughly polite to do that with his wife standing there talking to him, and so he answered her:

"Maude first and Georgie next, eh? We are likely to be left alone, I see. Does he belong to the genuine Brownlow race?"

"Yes, the genuine. You must remember him—he drove those handsome bays, and his mother sat at our table, and said Georgie was a most beautiful girl."

"Georgie had better take him, then, by all means; she is growing older every day," was Mr. Burton's reply, as he rattled his paper ominously, and glanced at the Stock column.

"But Georgie don't want him," Mrs. Burton rejoined; "and she does want some one else—some one, too, who has given her every reason to believe he intended making her his wife, and who ought to do so."

Mr. Burton looked up inquiringly, and his wife continued:

"I mean Roy Leighton; his name has been associated with Georgie's for years, and at times he has been very devoted to her, and almost at the point of a proposal; then some interruption would occur to prevent it. His mother's heart is set upon it, and so, I must confess, is mine; while Georgie's—well, the poor girl is actually sick with suspense and mortification, and I think it is time something was done."

Mrs. Burton was considerably heated by this time, and took a seat near her husband, who asked what she proposed doing.

"Nothing myself, of course—a woman's lips are sealed: but you can and ought to move in the matter. As Georgie's father, it is your right to ask what Roy's intentions are, making Mr. Brownlow's offer, of course, the reason for your questionings. You are going to the croquet party this afternoon—you can, if you try, find an opportunity for speaking to Roy alone, and I want you to do so."

At first Mr. Burton vowed he wouldn't. Roy Leighton knew what he was about, and if he wanted Georgie he would say so without being nudged on the subject. It was not a right thing to do, and he shouldn't do it.

This was his first reply; but after awhile, during which his spouse grew very earnest and eloquent and red in the face, he ceased to say he wouldn't, and said instead that "he'd think about it."

And he did think about it all the morning, and

the more he thought the more averse he grew to it, and the more, too, he knew he would have to do it, or never again know a moment's peace when under the same roof with his wife.

"I wish to goodness I had stayed in London—and I've half a mind to take the next train back—upon my word, I have; but then wife would follow me if I did, and hang on till I consented. She never gives up a thing she's set her heart upon; and if she's made up her mind that Roy must marry Georgie, he's bound to do it, and I must be the 'go-between.' I believe I'll drown myself!"

The poor man fairly groaned as he finished his soliloquy, and glanced from the window towards the river winding its way down the valley. His peace of mind for that day was destroyed, and not even Maude's blandishments had power to brighten him up, as he sat in a brown study, wondering "what he should say to Roy, and how he should begin."

The party were not to assemble at Leighton until half-past three, and so he had a long time in which to arrange his thoughts—longer, indeed, than he desired, and he was glad when at last the time came for him to start.

Maude, who seemed to be mistress of the ceremonies, had been unusually quiet and reserved during the morning, but when at lunch her uncle formally announced to the guests at Oakwood her recent engagement with John, she blossomed out again. The worst was over, she said, and she became at once her old self, and entered heart and soul into the preparations for the party.

She had visited Georgie in her room, had kissed her cordially, and kindly offered to bathe her head, or do anything which could in any way alleviate the pain.

Of the events of the last night not a word was said, and both felt that one page at least of that interview was turned for ever. Maude, who had nothing to fear, was the more natural of the two, and talked freely of the croquet party at Leighton, and so much wished Georgie could go.

"Perhaps you can," she said, "if you keep very quiet. Your headaches do not usually last the entire day."

But this was no ordinary headache, and when the time came for going to Leighton, Georgie, though better and able to sit up, declared herself too weak and nervous to dress herself for the occasion, and so the party went without her, poor Mr. Burton lagging a little behind with his wife, who was very kindly instructing him as to the better way of opening the conversation with Roy; who received his guests without the least suspicion of what was before him, or of what would be the result of that croquet party on the lawn.

(To be continued.)

FACETIÆ.

"No, my dear," said a mother to her daughter who had been taking a nap before dressing for an evening party, "you needn't rearrange your hair. You couldn't make it look any rougher if you did."

"Mamma," said an intelligent little girl, "what is the meaning of a book being printed in 12mo?"

"Why, my dear," replied the mother, "it means the book will be published in twelve months."

"You've destroyed my peace of mind," said a desponding lover to a transient lass. "It can't do you much harm, John, for it was an amazing small piece you had, any way," was the quick response.

"What do you know of the character of this man?" was asked of a witness at a police court the other day. "What do I know of his character? I know it to be unbleachable, yer honour," replied he with emphasis.

A GENTLEMAN, passing by a country church while under repair, observed to one of the workmen that he thought it would be an expensive job. "Yes, sir," he replied; "and I think we shall accomplish what our worthy minister has so long vainly tried; that is, to bring the whole parish to repentance."

AMPLE ACCOMMODATION.

"Two or three furnished rooms to let in a private family."

MS. in shop-window.
What a curiosity this family must be! We have all heard of individuals who are said to have the upper story unfurnished; but we doubt whether there is any other instance on record of two, nay, three furnished rooms being found in one family.—Punch.

AN ANSWER REQUIRED.—There is reason in the roasting of eggs. There is, too, no doubt, a cause why the weather is unbearably hot one day and insufferably cold the next—only it wants finding out. Professor Piazzi Smyth, Astronomer Royal for Scotland, has been trying his hand at this, and

has discovered that temperature goes in "cycles." "Taking the series of observations from 1837 to 1869, a hot time occurs about every eleven years, followed, at intervals of a little more than two years, by a very cold time. The past winter, it seems, was the first of a cold cycle, of which next winter, and probably that of 1871-2, will be exceedingly severe." But how does the Professor account for the recent sudden changes? Have the cycles somehow got out of working order, and the weather generally become a little mixed up?—*Judy*.

It is not strange that a spiritualist should make the tables rap out answers to questions, or dance about a room, when we remember that tables are animated things. At all rich feasts do they not groan under the good things of life? And what wit is there who has not, some time or other, set a table in a roar.

THE RIVALS.

City Man (who has the Family on his side): "That was a charming piece you've just played, Miss Florence, and the accompaniment on the flageolet was very pretty!"

"Ignorant beast!" thought Young Pampcourt, considered the best amateur flute-player at the bar.]—*Punch*.

GOOD ADVICE.—"Father," said a lady of the new school to her indulgent spouse, as he resumed his pipe after supper one evening, "you must buy our dear Georgiana an English grammar and spelling-book; she has gone through her French, Latin, and Greek, music, drawing and dancing, and now she must commence her English studies."

THE ECHOES AT KILLARNEY.

Captious Lady Tourist: "Boatman, why do you play that air out of tune?"

Boatman: "Musha, me lady, how can I help it? Shure, that's the way the fairies play it on the mountains. Jist listen to thim!"—*Punch*.

UGHT TO BE HAPPY.—A lady made a call upon a friend who had recently been married. When her husband came to dinner, she said: "I've been to Mrs. —." "Well," rejoined the husband, "I suppose she is happy." "Happy! Well, I should think she ought to be; she has a camel's hair shawl, two-thirds border."

AMBITIOUS.

Miss Ethel: "Mamma, dear, I think I shall be a duchess."

Mamma: "What nonsense, Ethel! What do you mean?"

Ethel: "Why, how would it be if I married a Dutchman?"

CROQUET AND CHIVALRY.—The croquet tournament at Wimbledon did of course not want a Queen of Beauty, nor did that Sovereign lack subjects of the most resplendent charms, but what sort of knights were the gallants who figured in the lists? Accustomed to distinguish themselves principally on the field which is carpeted with turf, doughty as the champions of croquet may be, they must, for all their prowess, be regarded as carpet knights.—*Punch*.

A DREAM OF THE FUTURE.

OVER SQUARES.

Miss Russell Square: "How curious it is that we should never have thought of this before, but kept all this sweet foliage and green turf selfishly to ourselves!"

Mrs. Bedford Square: "Yes, my dear; considering that we make very little use of these places ourselves, and, in fact, what with Brighton and Rotten Row, and Scotland, and morning calls, and Baden-Baden, it does seem selfish to make the common people walk in the dusty streets without a chance of a rest now and then under a tree—but how will they behave?"

Miss Belgrave: "That is just what I want to know; for, when I was a little girl, I used to see such horrid men lying fast asleep in the parks, or smoking short clay pipes, and the ragged children climbing over the railings—Oh! dreadful!"

Mrs. Devonshire Square: "Well, at any rate, the plan of leaving the squares open to the public seems to answer admirably."

Mrs. Burton Crescent and Mrs. Mornington Crescent, in a dolorous duet:

"We'll always be damp and exclusive, We'll have no people intrusive."

Mrs. Euston Square, South: "I do not so much mind the common people; but when I consider that if the squares are thrown open, Mrs. Euston Square, North, could enter my grounds, with all her lodgers—Oh! horror!"

At this state of the proceedings Mrs. Leicester Square caused so much amusement by declaring that she had no objection to the visits of the general public, that the meeting adjourned to croquet!—*Will-o'-the-Wisp*.

TIGHT LACING.—Mr. Myers, surgeon of the Coldstream Guards, affirms that ninety-five per cent. of the excessive cases of heart-disease in the army can be distinctly traced to the tightness of the uni-

form and the pressure of the belt. We have been preaching for years against the evil of tight-lacing to young women. Now it appears a lecture has to be addressed to the old women—at the Horse Guards, who make their laces of red-tape.—*Fun*.

NAVAL AND MILITARY.

The abolition of the ranks of Cornet and Ensign in the British Army having been determined, on the score of economy, it is said that Mr. Cardwell will carry his cheese-paring policy still further, and do away even with all cornets (a piston) in military bands. There is also a regimental colour for the report that he will put down the Queen's Ensign; while soldiers at ball practice are expected to pay their own shot.

Mr. Childers, in relation to his exploits with the Flying Squadron, will this season be promoted to manoeuvre the Horse Marines, with the local brevet rank of The Flying Childers.

Friends at a distance will please accept this intimation.—*Will-o'-the-Wisp*.

THEORY AND PRACTICE.—A contemporary speaks of "the time-honoured theory that races are indicated by the colour of the hair." Surely this is not so much a theory as an actual fact. Look at men returning from Ascot or the Derby, with their hair completely changed in colour by the dust. This indicates quite plainly their presence at the races, and a theorist need only speculate whether they return the better for the trip.—*Punch*.

REASON AND VANITY.

AN APOLOGUE.

"**APPEAL to Reason!**" writes a sage Whose book, on many a glowing page, Would teach the reader to control The workings of the human soul. The plan, no doubt, is often wise, But, should it fail, let me advise (Tis safe to try it!) an appeal The hardest heart is sure to feel: When Reason turns away her ear, Who knows but Vanity may hear?

As Chloe stood, one summer's day, Young, giddy, handsome, vain, and gay, Before her mirror, and essayed Her native charms by art to aid, A vagrant bee came buzzing round, And Chloe, frightened at the sound, Cried, "Marry, help! Go, Lizaie, fetch A broom and kill the little wretch!" Too late! despite the bustling maids, The wanton imp at once invades Poor Chloe's lip—the saucy thing— And fixes there his ugly sting. The culprit caught, the maids prepare To kill the monster then and there; When—trembling for his life—the bee Makes this extenuating plea:

"Forgive—oh, beautiful queen—forgive My sad mistake; for, as I live, Your mouth—(I'm sorry, goodness knows!) I surely took it for a rose!" "Poor insect!" Chloe sighed, "I vow 'Twere very hard to kill him, now; No harm the little fellow meant; And then he seems so penitent; Besides, the pain was very small, I scarcely feel it now at all!" J. G. S.

GEMS.

Be gentle and indulgent to all—be not so to yourself.

We should do good whenever we can, and do kindness at all times, for at all times we can.

When you want friends is the time to find out if you have any.

People who go about hacking and blacking other people's characters rarely have any of their own.

The best of us dislike being mistaken in our opinion as to the merit of our fellow-men; we would rather pardon their weakness than be brought to shame by their good qualities.

STATISTICS.

INDIAN HOME ACCOUNTS.—The home accounts of the Government of India were published recently. The total receipts from the 1st of April, 1869, to the 31st of March, 1869, were 19,718,822. 8s. 1d., and the disbursements, 16,692,840. 16s. 11d., leaving a balance of 3,025,981. 11s. 2d. The receipts included 6,389,084. 3s. 9d., instalments of capital from Indian railway and other guaranteed railway companies under their respective deeds of contract, and a sum of 100,071. 8s. 8d., received from her Majesty's Treasury in repayment of disbursements in England on account of the Abyssinian expedition. The principal items in the disbursements are:—

Administration and public departments, including the establishment of the Secretary of State in Council, 198,506. 4s. 2d.; guaranteed interest on the capital of Indian railway and other companies, 3,894,383. 4s. 6d.; superannuation, retired, and compassionate allowances, 707,339. 15s. 2d.; civil, furlough, and absentee allowances, 122,400. 10s. 4d.; charges connected with the army, 3,290,015. 10s. 9d.; interest on the home debt, 1,528,243. 16s. 11d.; dividends to proprietors of East India Stock, 7,352,069. 9s. 4d. The estimated receipts from the 1st of April, 1869, to the 31st of March, 1870, are 20,407,488. 1s. 6d., and the disbursements, 17,515,005. 11s. 6d., leaving a balance of 2,892,483. 10s. 11d. Among the miscellaneous items in the disbursements of this latter year is the following:—"Cost of articles purchased in this country for presentation by his Royal Highness the Duke of Edinburgh to Indian princes, on the occasion of his visit to India, and passages to India of two officers appointed to attend his Royal Highness, 10,088."

HOUSEHOLD TREASURES.

TO WHITEN YELLOW FLANNEL.—Dr. Artus tells us that flannel which has become yellow with use may be whitened by putting it for some time in a solution of hard soap, to which strong ammonia has been added. The proportions he gives are 1½ lb. of hard curd soap, 50 lb. of soft water, and two-thirds of a pound of strong ammonia. The same object may be attained in a shorter time by placing the garments for a quarter of an hour in a weak solution of bisulphite of soda, to which a little hydrochloric acid has been added. This latter process, we dare say, will be effectual, and probably the oxalic acid solution mentioned above would answer the purpose as well.

DYING HORSE.—Horn may be died black by a cold process in the following way:—The horn is first to be soaked in a solution of caustic potash or soda, until the surface is a little dissolved, and feels greasy. Then the article is to be washed and treated with Lucas's aniline black, after which it is to be slowly dried and again washed. By exercising a little care, we read that combs with fine teeth may be dyed in this way. The articles look of a dark brown colour by transmitted light, but seen by reflected light they are deep black.

MISCELLANEOUS.

It is stated that the claim which Lord Spencer has set up to the ownership of all that remains unenclosed of Wandsworth Common is in a fair way of being decided by the law courts.

The chestnut trees in France are this year covered with an extraordinary quantity of blossom. If the fruit ripens favourably the yield will be most abundant, and may go far towards supplying the deficiency in the corn harvest.

ECLIPSES.—On Wednesday, the 27th inst., there will be a partial eclipse of the sun, invisible at Greenwich. There will be only one other eclipse during the present year. It will occur on the 22nd of December, and will be visible (as a partial one) at Greenwich.

Four hundred sacks of mails from England, en route for Australia, recently passed over the Pacific Railroad, showing that this route from the United Kingdom to its Australian colonies has been put into practical operation, as the shortest and probably the safest.

"**A FARMER OF A THOUSAND ACRES**" has written from Pontefract to Mr. Mechi on the state of the crops. He says:—"This year I have some good promising crops of wheat, oats, and barley, and also potatoes and clover very good, and also turnips. I think, upon the whole, that Divine Providence is smiling upon us with abundance. I sometimes think that God smites us for lying about the deficiency of crops, when he at the same time supplies us bountifully."

At their Royal Highnesses' recent party at Chiswick the Princess of Wales wore a costume composed entirely of primrose, and looked, if possible, more lovely than ever. It was pretty to see her children running joyously about, and amusing themselves after their own fashion. A primrose dress was one of the most admired at Henley on the regatta day among a number of charming toilettes.

THE COST OF WAR.—Between the Russians and the allies there were more than three quarters of a million men killed, each of them at the price of 433. Each one of the 281,000 deaths during the American civil war was purchased by an expenditure of 3,345. In South America the cost was not more than 900. per man. The Danish war extinguished 3,500 lives at an average cost of about 2,000. The campaign which ended at Sadowa cost nearly 1,500. per man.

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NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

ROBERTSON.—We have no knowledge of such a firm.

MINNENABA.—The colour of the hair is dark brown.

JOHN B.—The handwriting is very good. "Chambers's Book-keeping," price 2s., will answer your purpose.

QUIZ.—The sapphire stone ranks next to the diamond for hardness; consequently, in hardness it exceeds the ruby.

COMIC CHARLIE.—Burnt cork powdered very fine. The skin must be anointed with cold cream before the powder is applied.

CONSTANCE DE BEVERLEY.—Some information about anatomic stones was given in No. 374, in reply to a correspondent.

L. T.—There at one time existed in England laws to restrain individuals from wearing extravagant dresses, but they were repealed in the reign of James I.

BERTHA.—Almost any respectable bookseller could supply you with a work on the electric telegraph. You will find nearly all you want to know in a popular cyclopaedia.

X. Y. Z.—The warts must be well cleansed, and relieved of as much superfluous skin as possible by means of a sharp pair of scissors; after which, lunar caustic should be applied.

AGNES.—Your friend must take to his English grammar again. Gorse or goos—either is correct—but the former is the word most generally used. It is pure Saxon for the shrub called furze.

WHITE GAZELLE.—Fresh air and daily exercise therein, with a plain but liberal diet, will cure both yourself and friend of all your ailments. Each of you should walk three or four miles every day.

GEA.—We do not know the exact pay of French troops; but there is not much difference in that respect between the French and the English. We must inform you that foreigners are not admitted into the French army.

LURLINE.—There is good authority for saying that "a man of talents" is the proper mode of expression. It has been observed, that if the singular number be used, the article must be introduced; thus, "a man of a talent."

N. C. T.—You should come to terms with the railway company, for you are in the wrong. You should have given the company notice of the dangerous nature of the contents of the cask; having failed to do so, you are liable for damages.

WALTER.—A little wrong done to another is a great injury done to ourselves. The severest punishment of an injury is the consciousness of having done it; and no man suffers more than when he is turned over to the pain and repentance of its remembrance.

BON JACKSON.—You will find it more desirable to rise yet a little earlier, and prepare your coffee in an ordinary way. You can, however, procure essence of coffee by simmering the berries over a slow fire. After straining, add a little brandy to preserve the liquid.

ETHEL.—Do the work for which you consider you are qualified, and then try to find a market for your productions. You will require great perseverance. Theoretical advice is of little service to you. Each has to find her own way as best she can. But work, and try; while you are labouring hard, Providence, who always favours the doers, may send you a friend.

ESSEK.—Generally speaking a master is liable for the acts of his servant, but in the case in question it is probable you would escape from payment for the damage. And for this reason, your man was doing something against your knowledge and wishes. You had positively refused him permission to take your cart to the fair or go to the fair at all. If you can substantiate your statements, you would not be liable for the accident.

ALICE.—Cheerfulness is a great blessing, and is the parent of many others. It gives a relish to simple fare, adds a charm to plain features, and keeps down petty troubles. Cheerfulness, in fact, is another name for health; it is difficult for people, when out of health, to be cheerful. There are causes of cheerfulness, as well as causes of gloom and despondency. On dull, foggy, or rainy days we feel less animation than in fine, sunshiny weather—and light if not the chief, is one of the principal causes of cheerfulness. Therefore, let your house receive as much as possible of this splendid gift of Providence.

A SAILOR.—Tar is made from the roots and branches of pine and fir trees, and is brought to England principally from Norway and Russia, where such trees are plentiful. The inhabitants of those countries engaged in the manufacture of tar make a large hole in the earth on the side of a hill, into which the wood and roots are neatly stacked.

These are covered with turf, which is beaten down upon the wood. Fire is then applied to the wood, and a slow combustion takes place without flame. During this combustion the tar oozes from the wood into a cast-iron pan arranged for its reception. This pan is furnished with a spout, through which the tar passes into the barrels placed beneath.

T. T. P.—No delinquency on your part will justify such conduct as you have described. You must, of course, pay the debt immediately, but in the meantime the peace must be kept. It has in many cases been decided that if a person comes into a house, and makes a noise and disturbs the peace of the family, although no assault has been committed, the master of the house may turn the offender out, or call a policeman to do so; and if a man stations himself opposite to another man's house making a disturbance and obstructing the public way, he can be arrested.

LOTHAIR.—1. Yes. 2. No. 3. You can signify your intention to be called by another name by means of an advertisement in the public papers. It is very unusual to change a name, unless the person doing so inherits property from the family whose name he wishes to assume. To change or add to your true coat of arms, it is necessary that the sanction of the College of Heralds, in Doctors' Commons, should be obtained. The interposition of the college entails great expense.

MAY.—Our English word, "Lady," is something more than a designation of rank, it is a memento of the kindness and benevolence to which the gentler sex are prone. In the old times the mistresses of manor-houses were accustomed periodically to give to the poor with their own hands certain portions of bread. When these bounteous folks were spoken of they were termed "Lef-days." These two Saxon words signify "Bread-givers;" and in process of time Lef-days became changed into Ladies.

MAT. C.—A portion of the information you require is given in the answer to Y. O. in the present number. For the rest, you must remember that the earth has a twofold motion. It revolves on its own axis once every day, and it moves round the sun once in the course of every year. In fact, the day and the year take their length from the time that it takes the earth to revolve once upon its axis, and to describe a path once round the sun. The velocity of the earth's diurnal motion is 1,043 miles per hour at the equator. The earth traverses the distance round the sun at the rate of 63,000 miles an hour, or about 19 miles in a second.

EVEN SONG.

Safe in its earth nest lying,
The bird is closing its eyes;
Dreams—while the wind is flying
From its lair in the lofty skies!
Sweet in its earth nest lying,
The flower is sinking to sleep;
Dream—while the waves are crying
On shores of the mighty deep!
For, dearest, thine eyelids close,
Safe as the birds in the bower;
Thy golden brow reposes,
Sweet as the head of the flower.
Night wind, murmur yonder!
Sea wave, break and scream!
Your voices can't a word send
To the beautiful shores of Dream!

B. B.

Y. O.—The size of the planet Jupiter is more than ten times as great as the globe on which we live. The sun is more than as much larger than the earth as one hundred and eleven exceed one. The number of the stars cannot be ascertained; they are countless. Astronomers say that judging by their light there are many stars which as far exceed our sun in magnitude as the planet Jupiter exceeds the earth.

THEO.—No one is able to tell the character by means of the handwriting. It is sometimes considered indicative of certain traits of the character, but even then the diction of the epistle aids the attempt to guess as much as the mechanical strokes of which the letter is composed. In your case, for example, fancy might say that you are honest, frank, resolute, vague, and superstitious. If all this be true, a great deal more would have to be found out before your character would be known.

RICHARD.—The owner of the land has no right to erect any new impediment to the course of the stream. But neither have the public any right to remove the mill which has existed for so many years. The proprietor has acquired possession of the water by prescription, that is, a long lapse of time; twenty years is sufficient. He cannot, however, make any new encroachment. The right in a flowing stream is not vested in one individual, but common to all. The owner of each bank of the stream is the owner of one-half the bed over which it flows, but the exclusive ownership of the water is in neither.

W. W. D.—If your friend stipulated to pay any fixed sum, that sum must be paid, unless there has been a failure on the other side. If the charges were undefined payment of the bill as delivered can be refused on the ground that an unfair price has been put upon the articles supplied. At all events, the demand must be resisted, but a reasonable sum should be paid into the court from which the summons is issued. You will, of course, insist upon the discontinuance of the supplies. It is almost useless to explain that your friend should never have placed himself in the hands of a stranger living at a distance. If he had no acquaintance upon whose recommendation he could rely, he should have applied to a practitioner of known respectability residing in his own neighbourhood.

S. L. X.—The Pilgrim Fathers is an epithet applied to some sturdy, high-principled Englishmen who left this country in 1620. Their departure was occasioned by religious differences, and resulted in their establishing themselves in North America. The nature of their pilgrimage was essentially different from the pilgrimages which were fashionable in the middle ages. These latter were considered as penances and atonements for certain sins, and were made to Jerusalem, Rome, and the shrines of certain saints. They are not viewed in a favourable

light by impartial writers, who describe them as a licensed vagrancy productive of disoluteness. The ladies, it is said, in their anxiety to obtain the spiritual treasures of Rome, often relaxed the necessary caution about one in their own keeping. Possibly you are correct in classing the crusades amongst pilgrimages, but the three about which you have written are quite distinct from each other, the first alone being commendable in the strict sense of the word.

TRD.—Notice must first be given to the registrar of the district in which the persons reside; they then appear before him at an appointed time, and in his presence mutually declare that they take each other for husband and wife. A binding legal contract of marriage is thus made without any religious ceremony. The registrar will furnish a certificate of the contract.

J. G.—The prevailing sentiment is admirable. We are sorry that the mechanism of the lines is so faulty, for we should be glad to give publicity to such cheerful thoughts.

J. E. and A. D.—Announcements of the description forwarded cannot be inserted.

G. N. B., twenty-one, dark hair, hazel eyes, loving, and in the Navy. Respondent must not exceed twenty.

C. B., twenty-three, medium height, dark hair and eyes. Respondent must be about twenty.

W. R. M., twenty, 5ft. 5in., dark brown hair, dark gray eyes, good looking, and loving. Respondent must be eighteen, loving, fond of home, and have a small income.

A COUNTRY LAD, twenty-one, 5ft. 4in., dark brown hair, light blue eyes, amiable, fond of dancing and music, has a little money, and would like to correspond with one that has a little also.

LIZIE and MARY.—"Lizzie," twenty-three, tall, black hair, brown eyes, domesticated, and cheerful. "Mary," seventeen, medium height, fair, brown hair, blue eyes, merry, and fond of home. Respondents must be tall, dark, good tempered, and fond of home.

INDORA, tall, fair, pretty, loving, young, and merry. Respondent must be under twenty, tall, handsome, and good tempered.

FAITH B., nineteen, good looking, dark, slender, and a tradesman's daughter. Respondent must be a tradesman, tall, dark, and loving.

R. J., sixteen, dark, good looking, and a tradesman's daughter. Respondent must be tall, good looking, and loving.

SARAH S., 5ft. 4in., pretty, and domesticated. Respondent must be well off, tall, fair, handsome, and good tempered.

WILD ROSE, nineteen, medium height, fair, loving, and domesticated. Respondent must be tall, dark, fond of home, good tempered, and loving.

TOM M., twenty-five, tall, dark, affectionate, and a mechanic. Respondent must be about twenty, and domesticated.

LORELY MAY, seventeen, with dark brown hair and eyes, can sing, dance, play, and cook a dinner. Respondent must be tall, dark, and gentlemanly.

BLUE JACKIE, twenty-two, good tempered, lonely, and in the Navy; wishes to correspond with a young woman who would try to make him happy.

NELLIE, eighteen, 5ft. 2½in., blue eyes, light hair, and good featured. Respondent must be a nice, amiable gentleman, rather dark, tall, and with a good income.

LAVATER, twenty-eight, 5ft. 9½in., fair, and good tempered. Respondent must be about twenty, and reside near Liverpool or Manchester.

COMMUNICATIONS RECEIVED:

MAGGIE E. is responded to by "John V.," twenty, 6ft. 1½in., rather dark, affectionate, fond of music and home, respectably connected, and has first class prospects.

B. B. by—"D. E. W.," twenty-five, has 350l. a year, and answers to her description.

HILDA by—"T. U. Z.," twenty-four, 5ft. 6in., fair, intelligent, and active.

LIZIE by—"Willis," twenty, tall, dark, handsome, gentlemanly, and with a good income; would like "Lizzie's" carte.

HARRY TRUE BLUE by—"Tender and True," under twenty, rather tall, loving, pretty, fond of home, and would like "Harry True Blue's" carte de visite.

BLACK-EYED NELL by—"Tom," twenty-five, tall, fair, handsome, brown eyes, chestnut hair, and has a good income; would like "Black-Eyed Nell's" carte in exchange for his own.

FAITHFUL and FOND by—"Knight Errant," fair, lively, loving, and in a good position.

S. L. B. by—"M. C.," twenty-five, 5ft. 6in., fair, and a seaman in the R.N.

MURRY TED by—"Lucy C.," medium height, dark hair and eyes, loving, and domesticated.

MUSICAL ALV by—"Julia," nineteen, brown hair, gray eyes, loving, domesticated, and fond of music; and—"E. O.," under twenty, tall, pretty, and fond of home and music.

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